

School of Theology at Claremont

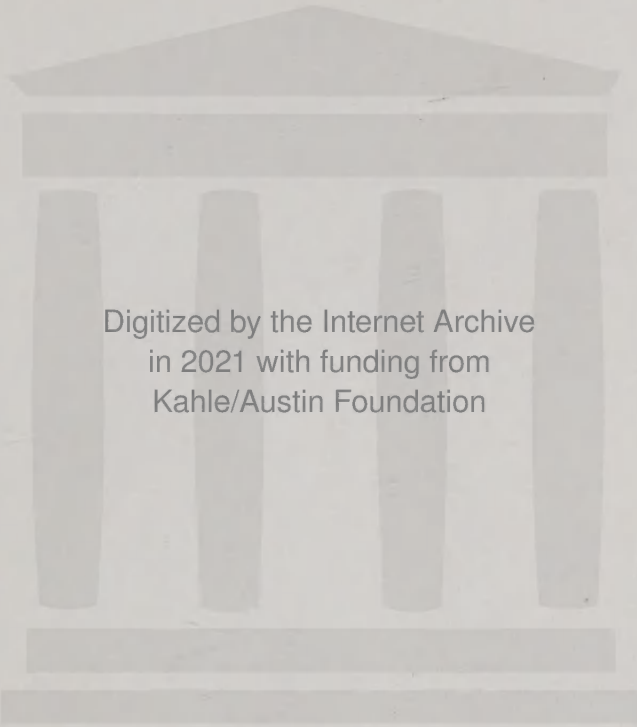


10011438469



The Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT

WEST FOOTHILL AT COLLEGE AVENUE
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2021 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation



L. B. Carlson.

2790
B75

Catching Men

Studies in Vital Evangelism

By

J. P. BRUSHINGHAM, D. D.,

Secretary of the General Conference Commission on Aggressive Evangelism.



INTRODUCTION

By

BISHOP LUTHER B. WILSON

Foreword by EVAN ROBERTS, of Wales,
and Contributions by other eminent
Specialists in Evangelistic
Work.

CINCINNATI: JENNINGS & GRAHAM
NEW YORK: EATON & MAINS

COPYRIGHT, 1906, BY
JENNINGS & GRAHAM

Dedication

To the General Conference Commission on Aggressive Evangelism :

BISHOP W. F. MALLALIEU,	REV. J. W. JENNINGS,
BISHOP L. B. WILSON,	REV. ROBERT STEPHENS,
BISHOP HENRY SPELLMEYER,	REV. M. M. CALLEN,
REV. L. B. BATES,	REV. J. F. STOUT,
REV. J. S. CHADWICK,	REV. G. E. HILLER,
REV. C. E. MOGG,	EVANGELIST HUGH E. SMITH,
REV. C. M. BOSWELL,	MR. J. W. POWELL,
REV. A. H. NORCROSS,	REV. LUTHER FREEMAN,
REV. R. L. SELLE,	MR. WM. PHILLIPS HALL,
REV. R. E. GILLUM,	REV. S. H. KIRKBRIDE.
REV. C. R. CARLOS.	

School of Theology
at Claremont

A 11986

Power Through the Spirit.

"Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be My witnesses . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth."



Conviction by the Spirit.

"And He . . . will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."



Prayer for the Spirit.

"These all with one accord continued steadfastly in prayer."

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"



Success in the Spirit.

"And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed. Amen."

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
INTRODUCTION, - - - - -	7
FOREWORD, - - - - -	9
I. THE POWER OF PRAYER IN SOUL WINNING,	13
II. THE PASTOR AND EVANGELISM, - -	27 ✓
III. THE PASTOR, HIS HELPERS AND METHODS,	37 ✓
IV. EVANGELISTIC ORGANIZATION, - -	53
V. CHILD EVANGELISM, - - - - -	60
VI. DECISION-DAY IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.—	
J. WILBUR CHAPMAN, - - - - -	68
VII. SOME REMARKABLE CONVERSIONS.—LILLIA	
S. BRUSHINGHAM, - - - - -	82
VIII. CAN THE CITY BE WON FOR CHRIST AND	
THE CHURCH? - - - - -	97 ✓
IX. SLUM MISSIONS—STREET EVANGELISM—	
MIDNIGHT MEETINGS. — ERNEST A.	
BELL, - - - - -	109 ✓
X. PREACHING THE EVANGEL.—C. L. GOOD-	
ELL, - - - - -	122

CHAPTER	PAGE
XI. THE EVERY-DAY EVANGELIST.—EDWIN H. HUGHES, - - - - -	138
XII. THE PERSONAL RELIGIOUS TOUCH.—A CONTRIBUTION TO AGGRESSIVE EVANGELISM.—SOLON C. BRONSON, - -	158
XIII. THE OBLIGATION OF THE CHURCH TO THE LABORING MAN.—CHARLES STELZLE,	177
XIV. THEORY AND PRACTICE IN SOUL WINNING.—JOHNSTON MYERS, - - -	197
XV. THOROUGHGOING EVANGELISM. — WM. A. SUNDAY, - - - - -	206

INTRODUCTION

BISHOP LUTHER B. WILSON

EVERY disciple of our Lord must rejoice in the place given to Evangelism by the Church of to-day. This is the theme in the conventions of young people's Christian societies, unions, and leagues. The missionary gatherings of recent years, whether of particular Churches or as in the Student Volunteer Movement of all the Churches, at once illustrate and deepen the conviction that the world must be won for Christ. There is scarcely a significant movement of the modern world which to Christian consciousness does not constitute a call to service, and there are not wanting signs of an awakening such as the preceding centuries have not seen.

The little book now sent forth with prayer and faith is meant to promote such an awakening. Its chapters are written by those who, while differing as to the non-essentials, are in profound agreement as to the essentials of Christian belief, and their words must not only quicken the sense

of individual responsibility, but also render the effort thus inspired increasingly effective. All the ways we travel are thronged by those for whom our Savior died. There is no life but His Cross may uplift it. There is no heart but His precious blood may cleanse it. The Christ who pleads for us with the Father is the Christ who pleads with us for the other man.

These pages read with heart attent shall help us to see more clearly the spiritual need of that other man; our obligation to him, whatever barriers of circumstance or condition seem to separate him from us; the resources within us, about us, and above us available to purposeful faith. And as the story is read of how others have been brought to Jesus it shall doubtless come to pass that many who read shall first bow down in prayer, and then, rising, go forth to Christlike endeavor.

Reader, be yours the meditation, the illumination, the consecration. Be yours likewise the holy joy of Catching Men.

FOREWORD

LETTER FROM EVAN ROBERTS.

EVAN ROBERTS, a man whom God has so greatly used, was requested to contribute a chapter to this volume. We reproduce, on the following two pages, his brief but significant reply. Does not the phrase,

“LIBERTY FROM THE LORD,”

indicate the main secret of his power?

Great Glen,
Leicestershire.
25.6.06

Dear Brother in Christ -
I am sorry that I
can not fully comply
with your request as I
have no liberty from The
Lord to undertake any
writing for print at present
but if you can use what
I have written on the enclosed
and you are at liberty to
do so.

Yours in the Marquis Service.
Evan Roberts.

Gal. ii, 20; John iii, 16; Psa. lxi, 20; Isa. liii, 11-12;
Phil. iii, 10.

Christ and His  are enough for All.

“Crucified” with and out of the Devil’s way.
“Risen” in there- out of the World’s way.
“Reigning” with Christ fore out of God’s way.

We died { One Life on the Throne.
with Him { One Death on the Cross.
therefore

CHAPTER I.

THE POWER OF PRAYER IN SOUL WINNING.

WHAT is the first, the most fundamental element in vital evangelism? What was the basis of Pentecost? Prayer—prayer to God, who had promised to give the Holy Spirit. How did the Wesleyan revival begin? The Holy Club met together to pray and to study God's Word. Every real revival in all human history has been dynamical rather than mechanical. It came down from God out of heaven, in answer to prayer. If we are to have a great revival in America, it will begin in a prayer movement. To be sure, prayer is not the only element. Prayer is not to be used as a substitute for obedience or for work, but that we may work effectually.

"This is my message to the American Churches," said Evan Roberts, "*Ask, and ye shall receive.*" Prayer is power, as certainly and as demonstrably as electricity is power. The universe is under law, undoubtedly, but the laws of prayer are as real as the laws of motion. Gravitation does not more surely attract bodies

CATCHING MEN

to the earth than prayer draws down blessings from the skies. Prayer, that is truly such, touches power from above itself, as the trolley pole reaches the overhead wire and transmits its power. Prayer touches the hand of God, the living, personal God, who makes the ear, the eye, the hand of man—the God who hears and sees and acts.

It is abundantly worth while to take time for the hidden work of secret prayer. "Get thee hence, and hide thyself," said God to Elijah, years before He said, "Go, show thyself unto Ahab." The place of prayer is the place of power. It may not be the place of the display of power. Elijah had been a very prominent prophet and statesman, but now he was not showing himself to kings. He was accepting a very humble support from a widow at Zarephath in heathen Sidonia. He was waiting upon God in hiding, and Ahab could not find him, though he sent to all the kingdoms round about in quest of the fugitive prophet. In lonely splendor Elijah was gaining power through prayer—power that soon burst forth on Carmel, and, with one tremendous stroke, annihilated the false, polluting, destructive religion of Baal, that was threatening to extinguish alike the knowledge of the true God and the national life of Israel. It was after years of obscurity, humiliation, and prayer, that he came forth from the secret place of power to the place

CATCHING MEN

of overwhelming public victory for the true God. There on Carmel, when the fire fell in answer to prayer, the people knew and shouted, "Jehovah, He is God!" An acute and grave crisis in the history of monotheism, and of the monotheistic nation, was met and passed victoriously. The same has been true of every great preacher from Chrysostom to the present time.

"The God that answereth by fire, let Him be God." When we pray as Elijah prayed, and obey as Elijah obeyed, we shall not hesitate to put God to the test openly as he did. And God will answer us openly, as God answered him. Elijah was not praying for the reflex benefit of prayer as a pious exercise. He expected an objective answer, and obtained it, in the sight of an excited and exultant nation, when the flaming, smoking altar convinced every beholder that God lives and answers prayer. When he prayed for rain, he expected an objective answer, and had a man on the lookout toward the great sea to watch for the answer coming in the clouds. So let us pray and expect, and receive the fire of the Holy Ghost, with showers and floods of salvation following. We have the same promises that Elijah had—and more. Why shall we belittle the promises of God by considering them fulfilled in our diminutive faith and experience, instead of bringing up our faith and experience, and achievement, to the fullness

CATCHING MEN

of those exceeding great and precious promises? Through them we are partakers of the Divine nature; through them let us become partners in the Divine work. "Ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "We are workers together with God." Let us begin at once to pray in faith for all the fullness of God. There need be no "weary waste" of profitless years between Bethel and Peniel; between the cross, which means life through Christ's death, and Pentecost, which means power through Christ's resurrection, ascension, and mediation.

To speak effectually with men in behalf of God, we must—first and last and always—speak effectually with God in behalf of men. Let our work be preceded, accompanied, saturated with prayer. At every turn of Nehemiah's campaign he was wont to say, "Nevertheless, we made our prayer unto God." He prayed and planned, and worked and worshiped, throwing the shuttle back and forth to both sides of his work—the human side and the Divine. Prayer puts us on the fighting line, and the fighting line compels us to take refuge with God. Prayer is combining with the Almighty against the adversary of God and man, as Job did and conquered.

So did General Havelock, and with his few God-fearing soldiers, was equal to the superhuman task of striking a death-blow to the great mutiny

CATCHING MEN

that involved the destiny of India's hundreds of millions of people, and the future of Christian civilization in Asia. "Call out Havelock and his saints, they are never drunk," became one of the noted sayings of that volcanic period in English and Indian history. When his army marched at six, Havelock rose at four, that he might occupy the two hours in prayer. When the army marched at four, he rose at two. If his army marched at two, he did not sleep at all, but remained awake to pray. It was this Havelock, the praying general, who accomplished the relief of Lucknow, than which there is not a more splendid achievement in all the history of war. With how much more confidence may we pray for victory, in our purely spiritual welfare, in behalf of the eternal interests of God and man!

Judson, the missionary, when he was dying, heard from the lips of his wife, as she read from a newspaper, that the Jews in Turkey had been converted through the published account of his sufferings for the gospel in Burmah. Mrs. Judson relates that an unearthly solemnity came over the dying missionary's face. "Love," he said, which was his way of addressing her, "this awes me. This alarms me." "Why should this trouble you?" said she. "This is good news." He replied, "When I was a young man, I prayed earnestly for the Jews, and I tried to go to Jerusalem

CATCHING MEN

as a missionary, because I read the words of the Lord about beginning at Jerusalem. But God sent me here to preach in Burmah and to suffer tortures in Burmese prisons. Now, by this means, God has brought Jews to repentance in Turkey." Then, the very effulgence of eternity resting upon him, Judson, by the Holy Ghost, said: "What awes me most is this, that I never prayed earnestly for anything but it came, soon or late, perhaps in the last way I could have imagined, but it came. God answers every earnest prayer." This account is given in both the standard lives of Judson, that by Raymond, and that by his son, Edward Judson.

Mr. Moody constantly acknowledged that his power to win souls was given to him in answer to prayer, particularly the prayers of two devoted women in Chicago, and a third, an invalid in London. Full acknowledgment of these sources of his power is made in his biography. Dr. Torrey prayed, and gathered praying men around him, especially every Saturday night, far into the night, to plead with God for a world-wide revival. After five or six years of such prayer, God led him out into world-wide evangelism. He steadily acknowledges his dependence upon God and upon the prayers of God's people. We know it is everywhere told that definite, earnest, constant prayer was offered day and night in Wales for thirteen

CATCHING MEN

years before the present great awakening came upon that principality.

"God can be had for the asking." These startling words of Lowell's are true. They put into nervous English monosyllables the great declaration of Jesus, that God gives the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. O for the fullness of the Spirit in answer to prayer! What is wireless telegraphy but the response of two instruments which are in tune? Prayer brings us into electric touch with God. Prayer is the medium through which comes Divine intelligence, love, energy, light, heat, power. "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you." There is no greater promise in God's Word than this. It is *the* promise of the Father. Besides all His other wondrous promises, this is *the promise*, comprehending and transcending them all; for it is the promise to give us God Himself. It means victory over evil. It means union with God to conquer Satan—God's enemy and ours. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

Let us pray, and obey.
That's the victory way.
In the Spirit we fight
With omnipotent might.
Then Satan must fall;
Yes, like lightning must fall,
"For we conquer to-day,
While we pray and obey."

CATCHING MEN

When men pray for any object, they will soon do more than pray. They will work for it. Prayer for souls, therefore, is fundamental to work for souls. He that winneth souls is wise, but it is the wisdom that cometh down from on high in answer to prayer. One of Wesley's associates said that he could not succeed in a certain place because there was no pleading man there—no one who wrestled like Jacob. Back of Charles G. Finney's great victory was one praying soul whose pleading followed him constantly through the period of his greatest successes. The very Christ Himself could not do many mighty works in Capernaum because of their unbelief. But Christ found place for His mighty works, and God will give us opportunity for the use of all the powers we gain from Him in prayer. Unregenerate men will turn away from the enticing words of man's wisdom, and some of them, in their hardness of heart, turn away even from Him that speaketh from heaven. But others will stand transfixed before the broken accents and stammering tongues that have received the power of the Spirit in answer to prayer. Then it is God's word, going forth from the mouth of God, to prosper and accomplish His will.

Our Lord Himself went apart to pray. Like Elijah, He hid Himself. All men sought Him, as the disciples said, when they found Him pray-

CATCHING MEN

ing. But the eager interest of the multitude to hear Him preach did not keep Him, as it keeps so many among us, from constant and persistent prayer—whole nights of prayer. Whether for preaching, administrative work like the calling of the twelve, or the suffering of the cross, our Lord always prepared by prayer. The night before the crucifixion He prayed—prayed in the upper room, prayed in Gethsemane.

“We will give ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word,” said the apostles. Not even the sacred charity of caring for widows must be allowed to divert them from their supreme work of prayer and preaching, or to distract them in it. Orphanages, almshouses, hospitals, schools, colleges, universities,—all these are Christ’s work and dear to Him. But let the deacons and deaconesses, or suitable officers by whatever name they are called, look after these blessed ministrations. Thou, O man of God, preacher of good tidings, give thyself to prayer and the ministry of the Word. If philanthropic duties have distracted you from praying and witnessing in behalf of Christ, pray, and ask others to pray, that suitable workers may be sent for these duties, and that you may be restored to your highest functions: namely, intercession with God for men and pleading as God’s ambassador before men.

Pentecost itself was the answer to ten days of

CATCHING MEN

constant prayer. The miracle in its pentecostal form has never been repeated, but in its pentecostal power it is constantly being renewed, wherever believing, obedient souls wait steadily upon God. We read that Alfred the Great of England said that the country needed not only good workmen and good war-men, but good prayer-men. No heart was ever born again, no nation ever born again, no age born again, except some one or more prayed. John Knox cried out, "Give me Scotland or I die," and God gave him Scotland, and Knox did not die. Whitefield prayed, "Give me souls, or take my soul." God gave him souls, and took his soul. Like Enoch, he was not, for God took him. When the Church prays truly and persistently, believers are multiplied. Those who are not far from the kingdom of God, the Church's own children and adherents, are gathered in. Those who have wandered far, and have rebelled and fallen deeply, are reclaimed and restored. It is pitiful that in any Christian land, or any Christian family, there is any one so foolish as to become a prodigal son or a prodigal daughter. But there are ten thousands of prodigals. Only by prayer and loving effort can they be restored to the Father's house.

Rev. Mr. Ingals, of London, was preaching in the Fulton Street prayer-meeting in New York City when a lady arose and gave this testimony.

CATCHING MEN

She said: "I used to live on a Western farm, out on the prairies. My husband was away traveling. One night, just as I was about to retire, and there was no one with me but a servant girl and my little children, as I looked in the glass I saw the reflection of a man, who stood just inside the door of a wardrobe closet. I saw in an instant, by the evil in his eye, that he was a burglar or a murderer. My first impulse was to scream. I knew I was perfectly helpless. Then I said, 'No, I will pray and trust.' I sat down, opened my Bible and read aloud the sixty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. Then I knelt in prayer and said: 'O Lord, I come to Thee this night for help and refuge. I beseech Thee to bless me, a poor, helpless woman. Thou knowest all about me and mine. If there is any one plotting evil against me, visit such a one with Thy mercy and salvation.'" As she rose from her knees, there stood before her the form of the vicious man, and he said: "Do n't be agitated, madam. I came into this house to-night to rob and plunder, and I even had murder in my heart if any obstacle should thwart my purpose. But O, that chapter you read was my mother's favorite chapter, and that prayer you offered seemed like one of mother's prayers." Then he walked out quietly, and she slept in peace.

After the lady had told this wonderful story of answered prayer, at the close of the meeting

CATCHING MEN

a gentleman came up and said: "Do you recognize me? I feel that you will not be hard on me. You will not prosecute me. I am that man. The chapter you read from the Bible and your prayer that night led me to Christ, who transformed my life. I have been a Christian man from that hour."

Prayer and the Word of God,—how many hearts of stone are broken by them! To cease to pray for the sinning is sin. The prophet Samuel continued to pray for rebellious Israel, lest he should sin against Jehovah by ceasing to pray for them and teach them the good and the right way. Even Mohammedans cry out every morning: "Prayer is better than sleep. Pray! Pray! Pray!" Let the Church only realize the power of prayer in Jesus' all-prevailing name, and she will call down measureless blessing upon herself and all mankind. She would set men and women apart for the ministry of prayer, as the men of Bethel sent Sharezer and his companions "to entreat the favor of Jehovah." (Zechariah vii, 2.) As Sir Walter Raleigh replied to Queen Elizabeth's question as to when he would quit begging, "When your majesty quits giving," so the Christian should cease to pray only when God ceases to answer prayer; that is, never.

Our Commission on Aggressive Evangelism has called for a world-wide league of intercession.

CATCHING MEN

This should have been done at the beginning of the campaign. It is not too late yet. There are no officers in this league, no meetings, except at the Throne of Heavenly Grace. But is it not an inspiration to feel, when one bows in prayer and asks definitely and explicitly for a richer experience, for the "fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ," for the glorious impartation of the Holy Spirit, preparing us for holy living and faithful service, for the unsaved of our homes and kindred, and for the perishing millions whether in Christian or in heathen lands, that thousands are offering the same prayer, among all the nations and languages of the earth? Let such prayer persevere, and the big revival will come speedily and gloriously. It came in England in the days of the Wesleys and Whitefield; it came in New England when Jonathan Edwards prayed and preached; it came in Ireland in 1857; it came in America in the days of Finney and of Moody; it has come in Australia; it has come in Wales; it is coming in India and Japan. It will come in the United States, and throughout the world, if we steadily pray and obey. To your knees. O Israel, and cry:

"Revive thy work, O Lord,
Thy work of quickening power;
O'er earth's vast wilderness pour down
The pentecostal shower!"

CATCHING MEN

Can there be a better way to close this chapter than to offer the petition of our World-wide Prayer League, and make it personal?

First. Grant me an enrichment of my own experience, and that I may attain unto the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

Second. Grant me a special and glorious impartation of the Holy Spirit, preparing me for holy living and faithful service.

Third. Grant Thy salvation to our homes and kindred, and to the perishing millions in Christian and heathen lands.

CHAPTER II.

THE PASTOR AND EVANGELISM.

SAID an Englishman to Rev. Dr. Campbell Morgan, "I believe in the Church evangelical, but not in the Church evangelistic." Absurd!—the Church can not be evangelical without being evangelistic. The Church can not be evangelistic without evangelistic pastors. Pastoral evangelism in each Church is the ideal.

The latest watchword of Protestantism is Evangelism. This is no new thing: it is only a return to original Christian principles. All Churches are feeling and responding to this breath of God. These organizing evangelistic movements of our times are hopeful signs. They evidence the stirring of new life at the heart of the old denominationalism.

A distinguished English minister has just visited America, Dr. Dinsdale T. Young. He addressed a great mass-meeting in the Auditorium at Chicago. The five thousand people were profoundly moved when he said the forward movement in England was really a backward movement—back to Wesley, back to Paul, back to Christ.

CATCHING MEN

It is what science would call reversion to type, and the Methodist type is evangelism. He took out his watch and said: "It was a quarter to nine o'clock when John Wesley's heart was strangely warmed. While I now speak your heart may be Spirit-filled." It was a most impressive moment. It was still enough to hear a heart throb. I can do no better here than to quote at length some of his utterances while he was in America, on the burning subject of evangelism.

He says that, both on ordinary lines and on special lines, the English Wesleyans are doing their evangelistic work. The great halls in the cities are working on what might be called special lines. "I am anxious," he said, "to emphasize the fact that we are doing a great evangelistic work on ordinary lines. I want to have the joy of saying that, more than ever for years in English Methodism, we have revived the idea of ordinary evangelism. 'Every minister his own evangelist,' is one of the watchwords of English Methodism to-day. I am glad to say that not only in those special realms of evangelistic service, but in the ordinary church and chapel of English Methodism to-day, in country and in town, evangelism is more and more the central thought, the great purpose, and the supreme endeavor. Methodism lives by evangelism. Names that you never hear, of circuit ministers of English Methodism, are names

CATCHING MEN

dear to God, we believe, because those men unknown to fame are, from Sabbath to Sabbath and day to day, laboring to make full proof of their ministry by devoted evangelism. I am to tell you that the evangelism of English Methodism is adaptive. Now we go to the suburbs with a cultured congregation, with the sons and daughters of wealth, and we preach to them nothing but the grand old gospel, the one message of salvation by the precious blood of Christ. We go to slumdom in our great cities, and we preach to the besotted people there the one everlasting gospel. We believe that individual regeneration is still the one sure pathway to social amelioration and to political amelioration. We say, Educate, educate, educate; legislate, legislate, legislate; but we say with most reverberating emphasis, Regenerate, regenerate, regenerate! Everywhere we are declaring what by the grace of God John Wesley loved to declare, that men must be born again. And I am thankful to say, O so thankful—more thankful than I could ever express—that more and more in our English Methodism this idea is gripping us, that not only every minister should be his own evangelist, but every individual Methodist should be an evangelist—every local preacher, every class-leader, every steward, every trustee, every man and woman and little child—all at it, always at it, with the noblest form of altruism, the publish-

CATCHING MEN

ing of the gospel of salvation. One of your great evangelical American divines said, 'Only a saving Church is worth saving.' And only a saving Church will be saved."

I do not say but that there is room and Scriptural authority for the official evangelist. He should not, however, be crowded to the front in such a way as to usurp, but he should rather be used to supplement the work of the pastor. The evangelist should not supplant the pastor; nor the pastor despise the evangelist. "Ephraim shall not vex Judah, nor Judah Ephraim." Nevertheless what we need is not more professional evangelists, but more evangelistic Churches, and pastors who are real leaders in evangelism.

The first requisite in the pastor's attitude is an overwhelming conviction that evangelism is the Church's supreme business. We would not underestimate the importance of our benevolent collections, debt-paying and educational endowment funds; but let us begin to report upon the floor of our Annual Conferences, and in our tables of statistics, not only the number of dollars raised, but the number of conversions professed. Let the supreme honor roll be that of souls rather than dollars. It is for this the Church was founded; for this its machinery was constructed, by this its past successes have been achieved. This conception of the Church's mission will make the pastor

CATCHING MEN

no mere dealer in things religious, but a true disciple of Him who died that through His death the whole world might have life.

The brave officer of the fire department defies smoke and blaze and death, to bring forth the languishing form of the perishing one to air and life. Willie McLaughlin, the first to reach the fire escape across the death alley in the Chicago Iroquois disaster, might have escaped unscathed. Instead, he was seized with a passion for imperiled lives and remained to rescue nineteen people, and was then himself carried to the hospital to die. Even so the Son of God come from heaven to earth, that He might build and man soul-saving stations along the dangerous places of life's voyage, and thus bring imperiled souls from earth to heaven. Whosoever, therefore, is called to plead with men in Christ's stead, "Be ye reconciled to God," must believe that evangelism is fundamental in the activities of the Church.

The second essential in the pastor's attitude is an intense persuasion that a genuine revival of evangelical religion is possible now. It is objected that this is a practical, materialistic age—an age to be influenced by education whose doctrine must be ethical rather than evangelical. These are the very conditions from which great revivals come. There can be no resurrection except from the dead. Every great revival in history has

CATCHING MEN

been the response of the Church, bound about with the grave-clothes of conventionality and laid in the sepulcher of formalism, to the all-commanding voice of Him who once stood beside the tomb in Bethany and cried, "Lazarus, come forth!" Christianity itself came forth from the grave of a dead and buried Judaism; the Reformation under Luther was the reviving of a Church from which, apparently, all spiritual life had departed. Methodism itself is the living witness that the Spirit of God has power at any time to call a frivolous age and a formal Church to its knees in penitence and prayer.

An ethical revival? Every revival is ethical in its results. It re-enacts the highest ethical sanctions of the race, and re-enforces the profoundest and broadest educational standards of the ages. A material age? That is a mistake. The leaders of thought in every school have long since crossed that divide, and find that all the springs of science and philosophy and history converge toward the river that flows from the throne of God.

Professor Huxley said before a meeting of clergymen: "The men of science may have to return to you, the custodians of the Divine words; and if we do, I trust we shall find that you have not betrayed the gates." Romanes, Lord Kelvin, and Professor James, of Harvard, have voiced the feeling of the educated world that "we have deal-

CATCHING MEN

ings with God." A devout yet skeptical thinker said recently, as he stood before the revelations of science in the laboratory: "I absolutely believe in the resurrection of the dead." Rev. Dr. Gunsaulus adds: "The world is ready for the full gospel of Pentecost if we are ready to present it. Shall the revival come in through the back door of our apathy or the front door of our wholeheartedness?"

Bishop Bashford, *en route* to China from the seat of the Cincinnati Conference, said in Chicago: "The time is ripe for a great revival. Our Cincinnati Conference session was pentecostal. The spiritual atmosphere so dominated the Conference that not an unkind word was spoken, either inside or outside the cabinet, during the whole week."

Evidently, therefore, the stone to be rolled from the sepulcher is not the attitude of the age, not the unresponsiveness of the Church, but *the unpreparedness of the pastor himself for spiritual leadership*. Says a missionary superintendent of wide experience: "Do you know, Brushingham, where the pinch is? Close touch with the preachers and an exceptional opportunity to observe the matter for a number of years convince me that the preachers must be stirred first of all. The people can be led in revival work, as of old; but they can not be led across a line of preachers whose faith has been numbed, until, practically, they see

CATCHING MEN

neither the need nor the possibility of deep conviction for sin and spiritual regeneration."

This attitude on the part of the pastor is not necessarily due to lack of interest, nor doubt concerning the importance of revivals. It is often a temperamental impediment, a self-distrust and timidity, a lack of that "holy boldness" which is a prime requisite in aggressive evangelism. Furthermore, the Church, through failure to recognize its highest mission, has gradually burdened the pastoral office with such a multitude of secularities that it prevents its pastors from being in tune with the loftiest ideals of a legitimate ministry in spiritual things. The Methodist Church often forces its preachers into the anomalous position of the Roman Catholic clergymen, where the pastor is called a *secular priest*. This state of things discourages men from assuming their proper place in spiritual leadership.

Let all such find encouragement in what others have been able to accomplish. What has been done may be done. Here is a successful man in a great city, personally known to the writer, who has a continuous revival in his Church every Sunday night. People are always committing themselves in his regular services, by the uplifted hand at least, to Christ. Asked as to how he was able to accomplish this, he replied: "There is nothing mysterious about it. I usually know

CATCHING MEN

the reason for every uplifted hand. I speak to men as easily and naturally upon the subject of religion as I formerly did upon the subject of politics when I was in that profession. They come to the public service already persuaded. Considering this the chief function of my ministry, I allow nothing to turn me aside from this one object."

A young minister from Oklahoma called upon the Rev. Dr. Carlos, presiding elder of the St. Louis District, for any kind of an appointment. He was told that there was nothing available except the possibility to begin a work in certain neglected parts of the city. "If I can find a house for my family," said this man of great faith, "I will begin preaching yonder among that unchurched cluster of laboring folk." A tent furnished by Dr. Carlos was set up. Six weeks from that date he had gathered, by house-to-house visitation during the day and effective preaching nights and Sundays, a Sunday-school of one hundred, with a membership of sixty for the new Church.

While writing these pages the author, preaching in his own pulpit in Chicago, referred to the success of a Presbyterian minister in Seattle. This man had adopted Wesley's maxim, "At it, all at it, and always at it." Together with his helpers he had added, within two years, eight hundred members, by profession of faith, to his

CATCHING MEN

Church. At the close of the sermons a gentleman asked: "Did you mean Rev. M. A. Mathews? I am a Presbyterian; I know him well and every word concerning his success is true." I knew a man in Christ appointed to a forlorn hope in a great city. The church was upon a leased lot, the lease had expired. The congregation were tenants at will, and had been ordered to move off the premises. The windows were broken, the building dilapidated. The audience had dwindled to twenty-five. The collections were insufficient to pay the sexton. The aforesaid pastor and his wife began a house-to-house canvass. There was a revival which resulted in a probationers' list of 126; 125 of these united with the Church in full membership. Two of the converts are now successful pastors. There came a new church-building and a parsonage, with an annual pastoral support of \$2,000. The man who had received a poor appointment was thus promoted to a good appointment. Similar results can be secured anywhere under the stars if we are willing to pay the price. It means a sacred oneness of purpose which refuses to be side-tracked, and which replies to every call that is purely secular, or merely for social amelioration, even to intellectual culture apart from Christ, in Nehemiah's heroic words: "I am doing a great work. I can not leave it to come down to you."

CHAPTER III.

THE PASTOR, HIS HELPERS AND METHODS.

FIRST of all, it is desirable that pastors help one another in co-operative pastoral evangelism. Pastors organize into groups representing contiguous Churches. Thus associated, they interchange and assist one another. Whenever any pastor desires assistance from his brethren for special evangelistic work, such assistance is supplied by the other pastors in the community. For example, a prominent city preacher would give one continuous week of service, including a Sunday, to some pastor in the rural districts. The committee supervising this interchange of pastoral service undertook to supply the pulpit thus made vacant, without expense to the pastor or his Church. Perhaps four or five laymen would conduct the Sunday evening service as a platform meeting. One result of this movement in the New York East Conference was to report a net gain of 2,500 members in one year.

Next in importance to pastoral evangelism is lay evangelism. The laymen are interested in immediate and definite results. Churches say,

CATCHING MEN

"Send us a preacher that will draw." There is nothing useful unless it draws. A porous plaster, a chimney, a yoke of oxen must draw. A preacher should draw, but should not a Church also draw?

✓ "Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that he would put his Spirit upon them all!" *Amos 11/4*

What is needed to-day in Church and State is an adequate sense of individual responsibility. The evangelistic order, the Paulist Fathers, whom the Catholic Church has assigned to be missionaries among the Protestants, will allow no Romanist to attend the lecture unless he brings a Protestant with him. A certain judge was not permitted to enter the church door in an Eastern city because he did not have his credential; namely, a non-Catholic friend. What a tremendous leverage when the speaker arises to know that fully one-half of his audience are fit subjects to respond to his appeal, while the other half are personally acquainted with the first half and will re-enforce individually what the lecturer has said publicly. When will Protestantism also expect the Church as well as the preacher to *draw*? *u*

✓ There is a growing interest, in all denominations, among the leading laymen. Many instances could be given, not isolated cases merely, where the laymen are ready to assist the pastor in his evangelistic efforts. They are not only anxious to see things done, but they are ready to

CATCHING MEN

help in the doing of them. They realize that there is something to be done as well as taught, and they have read the gospel, "Of all that Jesus began both to *do*" no less than to "*teach*." The late lamented Dr. Joseph Parker, of London, addressing the ministers of Chicago, rapped upon the pulpit dramatically, as if seeking admission to the door of a house, "Is evangelical religion in?" "No, evangelical religion is out; always out, doing good through its clergy and laity; out, pushing forward the great Master's claim upon the souls of men already redeemed by His blood." These laymen agree with the good Scotch woman who, on her way home from the kirk, was met by a belated worshiper and asked, "What! Is the sermon done?" She replied, "Na, na, the sermon is said; it is yet to be done."

In the Methodist Episcopal Church, presiding elders and bishops are earnestly asking how their official duties may be curtailed in order that they may devote time to help the pastors in evangelism. After the pastor has felt both the potency and the impotency of all human help—the zeal of the laity, the co-operation of his fellow pastors, assistant pastors, deaconesses, and all others—yet, as the field of conflict opens before his gaze and the issues of time and eternity, heaven and hell, hang in the balance, he feels the profound need of a Higher Helper and a stronger Arm than that of

CATCHING MEN

flesh. He is brought into the very presence of God and the angels and asks, Who is sufficient for these things? As one has well suggested, "Let every preacher, old and young, in city and village church, in the schoolhouse appointment or first-class station, just fall on his knees, and, with eyes fixed on God, with uplifted hands and sobbing voice, ask the question, Why am I in the pulpit? Let the question, Why am I a preacher? be answered alone before our God."

The confusion of traffic, the roar of business, all the turmoil of a great metropolis, surge about the base of St. Paul's, when suddenly, at the busiest hour of all the day, a great volume of sound smites all this jarring discord into dumbness, as from the cathedral tower four hundred feet above the pavement, the largest bell in London rolls over the city the message deep-graven on its massive brazen lips, "*Vae Mihi, Si Non Evangelizavero!*"—Woe is me if I shall not evangelize. So the true preacher is one in whose soul all the cries of ambition, all impulse to self-indulgence, all worldly voices, have been beaten into silence by the deep-toned witness from his spirit's highest belfry, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel!"

He sees not only the worthship and worship of God, but feels the touch of a live coal taken from off the eternal altar for personal holiness

CATCHING MEN

and wholeness. With clean lips and sin-purged heart he stands ready to go to others. He has had a vision, not only of the kinship, but kingship and lordship of Christ. On the way to some Damascus goal which he never reached, he has seen a vision, and heard a voice, and asked with trembling heart, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He feels the Masterful power of the Master. He says, "The Lord Christ is my helper; of whom shall I be afraid?" A young preacher was once required to speak with Mr. Wesley upon the same platform. "Were you not greatly embarrassed?" asked a friend afterwards. "No," was the reply, "I saw Christ before me; and I was not afraid though John Wesley sat behind me."

Such a pastor is not only an evangelist, but in his vision of the nail-pierced One he finds his evangel. He is now a messenger with a message, a missionary with a mission, a preacher with a passion. He has utterly submitted to the King, and is prepared to persuade others to do likewise. He stops at no half-way house. Coming from the audience-chamber of the Prince of Peace he heralds not a new gospel but "more gospel" of the same all-redeeming Christ—a Christ who is able to save to the uttermost from the guilt and penalty of sin, from the reigning power of sin, and the love of sin. The sinless One will reveal

CATCHING MEN

sin's shamefulness. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." For what purpose? "And shall be" . . . You are to be somebody . . . "Witnesses" . . . Unto what? Rather unto whom? . . . "Unto Me! unto Me!" . . . Such was Peter at the day of Pentecost under the dominion of the Holy Spirit, a witness to the Lord of Glory, crucified, risen, and ascended. The pastor-evangelist has but one message for this or any age; namely, "Submit fully to the Lord Christ." "Proclaim first the lordship of Christ; secondly, the cross of Christ; thirdly, the resurrection of Christ; and finally, an indwelling Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. That was Peter's full message at Pentecost." "God hath made him both Lord and Christ." "This Jesus whom ye crucified." Crucified! The cross has been well called "the heart of the gospel." "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all."

"Whom God hath raised up." If we are to be an apostolic Church we must still preach Jesus and the resurrection. *For if Christ be not raised from the dead we are of all men most miserable, and are yet in our sins.*

The pentecostal incoming and indwelling of Christ by the Holy Ghost is the abiding heritage of the Church. "He shall abide with you forever." Only as we go forth in His name and

CATCHING MEN

power from our knees to the battlefield, can we hope to conquer.

The Spirit-filled pastor will find opportunity everywhere. St. Paul, a prisoner at Rome, chained to a soldier in distressful circumstances, asked the Church to pray—that he might have fortitude in the hour of his great trial? that he might bear up under the humiliation of his deep distress? No! He asked no such thing. He asked them to pray that utterance might be given him, that when he opened his mouth in personal evangelism he might speak boldly as he ought to speak, and make known the hidden truths of the gospel, for which he was an ambassador “in a chain.”

The truth is, men and women are hungering and thirsting to hear the gospel in quiet, heart-to-heart, personal conversation. Opportunities present themselves for this service constantly. An eloquent Boston pastor lectured to a class of theological students in New England. They thoroughly agreed with the wisdom and utility of the doctor's suggestions upon personal evangelism. They regretted, however, the absence of any opportunity for such work in the schools. Dr. S. conversed spiritually with the elevator man, and found that neither he nor the janitor had heard a word personally upon salvation for ten years. Religion, like charity, should begin

CATCHING MEN

at home. It need not remain there, but it may well begin at the doorstep of common life.

Mr. Moody asked a man on the street car in Detroit, "Are you a Christian, sir?" "No, but I wish I were." "Ask God to forgive you, and He'll do it now." "What, on this crowded street-car?" "Yes, right here. Let us pray." They bowed their heads upon the seat in front. The winged messenger of their prayer returned with peace and pardon. Mr. Moody excused himself to take the train at the station. The new convert also leaped from the car and followed the great evangelist, asking, "Whom am I to thank for the wondrous blessing that has come to my heart?" "O," said Moody, "thank God, and speak to some one else in Jesus' name."

The method of the pastor is of least importance. The great requisite is unction. Love always finds a way. And yet the question of what methods are available is a legitimate one, if not vital. We may ask what new thing shall we do. There can be no evangelism without a message, a messenger, a motive, a method. The least of these is the method. It is less a question of method than of enthusiasm. Enthusiasm means etymologically and actually God-inspired. The man whose soul is on fire to accomplish a beneficent work will find some way to do it, some method to compass it. Love finds a way. Evangelist John

CATCHING MEN

McNeil, speaking upon this subject, said: "My theme has four divisions. First, be earnest. Second, be very earnest. Third, be very exceeding earnest. And, fourth, get there."

No evangelistic pastor should be prejudiced in favor of one method as against another. Some methods are better than others, but any method that succeeds is a good one, while a method that does not succeed is unworthy to be continued.

The winning of souls is supposed to be the great passion of the pastor's life. "Cromwell," said Wolsey, "I charge thee fling away ambition." Good advice, perhaps, for the politician, but not for the Christian pastor. His is an ambition not to be flung away, but to be kept fostered and fed in order to shine as the firmament and as the stars for ever and ever—to turn many to righteousness. Every method that wins is a good one. St. Paul, the great preacher-evangelist, refers particularly to two methods of successful soul-winning, "publicly and from house to house." He reminded the elders of Ephesus that he had been a faithful pastor. He was also of necessity an evangelist, for there was no Church in Ephesus until he gathered it. He combined a public ministry with personal evangelism.

Neither method should be emphasized to the disparagement of the other. The pastor should deal with souls individually as if he never

CATCHING MEN

preached, and he should preach as if he never did anything else. Every pastor may not always have a successful revival. But, alas! that he should never have experienced in his public ministry a great revival movement. Faithful evangelistic pulpit work upon Sunday nights, together with personal evangelism from house to house and heart to heart, will mean a "perennial revival in every Church" and "salvation in every home."

"From house to house" is the method best adapted to bring the baptized children in our own families into full fellowship with Christ and the Church. The children are born within the covenant promise. The pastor should keep, not only an alphabetical list of his membership, but a cassified street list of his families. A pastor asks a Sunday-school teacher, "How many scholars of your class are Christians or members of the Church?" "I do not know," is the answer. "Why are you a teacher?" "O, I teach the International Lesson." "But what is the final aim of your teaching? Should you not seek definitely and prayerfully to bring your entire class to Christ?" Said the evangelist-pastor: "Just a moment, and I will look and tell you how many of your class are in the Church." He knew his sheep by name—and the lambs.

Pastoral work of the right kind finds out all

CATCHING MEN

about the spiritual status of the young people. Mary is in the Church, but John, who is absent from home, is not enrolled among the professed followers of the Master. Naturally as the breath of the morning falls upon the open petals of the apple-blossom, prayer is offered by the pastor for the one outside the fold, especially if he is the one

“Torn by the brambles,
Bruised in the falling.”

Such a prayer is the most effective reminder to those parents of their vows to God and obligations to their sons and daughters. There will be no real objection to this method of pastoral prayer. There may be embarrassment because the custom has fallen into disuse.

A pastor and his wife kneeled with a mother and her children in prayer at the fireside. Presently a young lad of six began to kick the preacher vigorously and cry out loudly in defense of his mother's offended dignity. Evidently the boy saw a most unaccustomed sight. The mother was greatly embarrassed at the time, but afterwards told a neighbor how very much pleased she had been with the prayer and how deeply she appreciated the pastoral call. How are we to reach the masses and bring them back to God who have wandered away from him? A distinguished pastor was once asked, “What is your hobby, Doctor?” “Preaching, madam.” “O,” she said, “I know

CATCHING MEN

you are a preacher. But apart from preaching?" He said, "There is nothing apart from preaching, madam." There is something apart from preaching in soul-winning; namely, personal work.

How are we to reach the people? How are we to win the children and bind their hearts in deathless love to Christ and the Church, if not one by one? How are we to harvest a field of corn if not stalk by stalk? or shear a flock of sheep if not one by one? We love to think of William Gladstone swaying the British Parliament as he held aloft "the torch of truth in fitting and eloquent speech;" but I love to think of him also at two o'clock in the morning after Parliament has adjourned, going to the bedside of his suffering, dying coachman in prayerful personal sympathy. It is not the torch-light procession and the great mass-meeting, but the still hunt, that wins in politics as well as bags the game in the forest.

No limitations of daily toil or social environment or business obligations should keep a live Christian, much less a true minister of Jesus Christ, from personal evangelism. With him it should be Christ first, always, and forever. It is said that Harriet Beecher Stowe invited Charles Sumner to call at her home in order to meet a distinguished guest. Sumner replied: "I have long since gotten beyond any interest in individ-

CATCHING MEN

uals." She retorted, "Then, sir, you have gotten beyond the Almighty Himself, because, fortunately for us, He is personally interested in each of us."

Personal evangelism calls for a high grade of religious experience and Christian consistency. One can not be successful unless he have a heart warm with the latest impact of Divine love. Success in pastoral evangelism from house to house implies close touch with the unseen dynamics. One with an indifferent type of religion may speak fluently to thousands, but can not plead effectively with a single soul.

Bishop Goodsell writes that the young people of our own families can not be reached except by pastoral faithfulness in hand-picking. "This requires more courage than in hammering from the pulpit against those who can not hammer back. In fact, this work gets souls ready to go to the altar, and is often the beginning of the true revival after the old type. The minister who does this work must live near to God, or he will be told by some one whom he approaches, Physician, heal thyself. . . . While I pray we will never fail to use the ancient method (altar service). I hope we shall bring our preaching to this more courageous, heart-searching, and, with many, more successful method of soul-winning."

God's plan is "publicly and from house to

CATCHING MEN

house." A pastor with prayer upon his lips, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, in his heart, can not but be a personal evangelist. He will be a dexterous swordsman. He will read, and read, and re-read the several books of the New Testament, until the text outlines itself and the promises are indelibly impressed upon his memory. He will use the sword of the Spirit until he has become an expert fencer. He becomes both strong and skillful, for he "eats" the words of life and breathes the breath of God.

Jesus was the first great personal Evangelist. Not only did He preach to the woman of Samaria, to Nicodemus, to the rich young man; but the hearts of the unnamed disciples burned within them as He talked with them on the way to Emmaus. The late Dr. J. O. Peck, a most successful pastor-evangelist, said that if it were revealed to him from heaven by the archangel Gabriel that God had given him the certainty of ten years of life, and that, as a condition of his eternal salvation, he must win a thousand souls to Christ in that time, and it were further conditioned that to this end he might preach every day for the ten years, but might not personally appeal to the unconverted outside the pulpit, or that he might not enter the pulpit during those ten years, but might exclusively appeal to individuals, he would not hesitate one moment to make the choice of personal

CATCHING MEN

effort as the sole means to be used in securing the conversion of the thousand souls necessary to his own salvation. "Yet," he adds, "God's plan is better; namely, that pastors shall be both evangelical preachers and walking evangelists."

A venerable professor in a theological seminary has said, "Had I my ministry to repeat I would put more power and less polish in my sermons, and give more time to personal work."

Fellow pastors, let us expect great things from the carrying out of God's plan, publicly and from house to house. Our evangelism will become contagious. The whole Church will fall into line in the very midst of our public ministry; the laity, even the children of the Sunday-school, will witness privately. While we preach they will enforce the truth by a word in season. This will be well-pleasing to God; for He would have no "dumb children" in His family. Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and there were salvation in every home! "Sir Michael de Costa, the great musical director, was conducting a rehearsal by four thousand performers. All manner of instruments were being played, and all parts of music were being sung. In one of the grand choruses which sounded through the vast building like a wind from heaven, the keen-eared conductor suddenly threw up his baton and exclaimed, 'Flageolet!' One of the little flute-players had

CATCHING MEN

stopped. Something was wanting, therefore, to the completeness of the performance, and the conductor would not go on. As Browning sings in "The Boy and the Angel:"

'Thy voice's praise seemed weak. It dropped;
Creation's chorus stopped.'

"Jesus Christ is conducting His own music. There is indeed a vast volume of resounding harmony rolling up in anthems that fill the heavens; yet if one voice is missing He knows it; if the voice of one little child has ceased He notices that omission most of all. The man who ascends in a balloon hears the music of a child's voice last. God can not be satisfied with the mightiest billow of harmony that breaks in thunder round His throne so long as the tiniest wavelet falls elsewhere. Flageolet, where is thy tribute? Pealing trumpets, He waits your blast. Sweet cymbals, He desires your silvery chimes. Mighty organ, unite thy many voices in the deepening thunder of the Savior's praise. And if there be one pastor or layman among us who thinks his hoarse tones would be out of harmony, let him know that Jesus revises every tribute offered in love, and harmonizes the discords of our broken life in the music of His own perfection."

"But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."

CHAPTER IV.

EVANGELISTIC ORGANIZATION.

THIS is the age of organization, some people say of over-organization. "Over-organization" is a misnomer. The danger is not in too much organization, but in too little life. Organization is invaluable if it is vitalized. I do not mean galvanized into the semblance of life, but with red corpuscles in its blood. Some one protests against "inordinate organization," where organization dominates and subordinates life. In that case it is like inordinate affection—a perversion of true functions. We will concede that organization has its abuses, but it likewise has its uses. Organization at its best will surely bring results.

The question is raised, Why is special organization necessary to do the principal work for which the Church itself was established? Subordinate interests in the Church, financial and social, are backed by systematic plans. It is a mistake to suppose that the great work of the Church will take care of itself without definite and wise prearrangement. Let me illustrate. The organization of a Committee on Evangelistic Work by the Presbyterian General Assembly, especially for

CATCHING MEN

simultaneous movements in the large cities of the United States, has been Divinely ordered and greatly blessed. The organization of a Commission on Aggressive Evangelism by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1904, has undoubtedly been a strong factor in changing the net annual gain of membership, within two years from about 30,000 to more than 100,000. The Michigan Conference of the same Church took evangelism for granted, with a doleful, disastrous consequence—a net loss of 500 members. The very next year, with systematic effort and co-operative pastoral evangelism, there was a net gain of 1,700 members in the same Conference,—making a difference of 2,200 members between the two years.

I believe that every religious organization in every denomination, from the highest Council down to the individual Church, should have its own special committee on positive evangelistic work. Certainly the subject is equally and even more important than that of Church records, music, benevolent enterprises, or any phase of the business affairs of the Church.

It is not necessary for us, or for any one, to prescribe methods and details of organization. In every community there are leaders, actual or potential, who can give the necessary organization and leadership, once the spiritual impulse has

CATCHING MEN

been received. Abraham Lincoln believed that every regiment in the army had in it brains enough to run the government of the United States. General Booth of the Salvation Army says that, among women, one in thirty is a born leader. The problem of organization is to find these born leaders, appoint or acknowledge them as leaders, and support them loyally. Verily, "there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Let evangelists and committees on evangelism recognize that God has already set in the Church the members who are capable, through the indwelling, vitalizing, empowering Spirit, of fulfilling all the functions of the body of Christ. What follows is, therefore, only suggestive and not prescriptive, designed merely to help the whole Church as existing in any community to realize herself and accomplish the work that God has already put in her heart and in her power to perform.

Care must be taken not to set people at work for which they are not gifted. As you would not ask a blacksmith to repair a watch, so do not ask some strong, enthusiastic brother to do the most delicate of spiritual tasks. There is work for the spiritual blacksmith, with all his blow and blows. Help him to find his own task and to do it. Find for the delicate touch of the spiritual watchmaker or milliner his or her task, and encourage them

CATCHING MEN

to do it. All members have not the same office. One is like the eye, another like the hand. Every man has his own gift or gifts from God.

Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman suggests that at least one-tenth of the Church membership should be organized into bands for personal work with the unsaved or those who are seeking the Lord. These workers should be, of course, the most spiritual and tactful of the Church's members. During services they should be seated throughout the congregation, in the proportion of one worker to every ten or fifteen of the congregation. Every personal worker should have his Bible both in his heart and in his hand. Above all, he must have a genuine, Christ-like interest in the people, being eager and prepared to help them find the salvation of God.

Existing organizations, either the Church or community of Churches, should be utilized in the revival. Officers of Endeavor Societies, Epworth Leagues, Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, Sunday-schools, Women's Temperance and Missionary Societies, should be invited to meet the pastors and committees of business men for consultation and co-operation. Thus existing machinery can be set in motion, and if it is energized by the Holy Spirit, infinite results are inevitable. Duplication or multiplication of machinery is not desirable, but never hesitate to create a new organization or to appoint a com-

CATCHING MEN

mittee, or a dozen of them, if the work contemplated does not fitly fall to an existing body, or if that body fails to perform its appropriate work. Sometimes the addition of a new member to an inefficient committee will make it effective.

The power of music in the conversion of souls must be fully recognized, and adequate preparation made for its use. Moody could never have done his great work without Sankey. Dr. Torrey would scarcely be himself without Mr. Alexander. John Wesley without his brother Charles could not have founded Methodism. Christianity is the singing religion. Infidelity has no songs. Heathenism has no choral services, Mohammedanism no Glory Song. The Bible has its Book of Psalms, the Church has her hymnals, the Sunday-school has its song-books. The preaching evangelist needs the singing evangelist, as the army needs the navy. Neither is complete without the other.

In union meetings the Committee on Music should select from the various Churches as large a choir as possible of those who will be prompt, regular, and sympathetic with the work. The leader must be not only competent as a musician and director, but also a man of true Christian character and a lover of souls. Soloists especially might better not sing unless they sing with the spirit, realizing that the glory or despair of immortal beings is involved in their utterance of the

CATCHING MEN

gospel in song. Song-books must be supplied to the entire congregation, and familiar songs chosen that all may sing.

A competent Committee on Publicity is of great importance. The gospel is essentially a proclaiming of good news. It is its very nature to require publicity. To conceal the gospel is a suppression of the truth. To advertise it insufficiently is to leave some in ignorance of the word of life. We must neither take away the key of knowledge, nor be idle nor half-hearted in using it. Signs and banners, large bills and handbills, cards, and advertising novelties, should be used freely. Editors and publishers of newspapers are usually generous with their space. They and their reporters should be treated with all courtesy, and every facility afforded them.

Financial responsibility and authority should be intrusted to a committee of business men, well known for their integrity and Christian character. If it is absolutely necessary, ministers may co-operate with them, but it is much better that business men care for the business interests of the work, while the spiritual men devote themselves wholly to their spiritual work. The entire expense must be provided for in advance or during the meetings, that no reproach of financial dishonor may disfigure the work. The unjust shall not inherit the kingdom of Christ and of God.

CATCHING MEN

The comfort and safety of the audience will be in charge of the ushers, responsible to a head usher, who must see that the ordinances of the city are complied with, and exercise precaution against fire, panic, and accidents.

Special meetings for men, women, young people, children, may be arranged as opportunity is offered or occasion requires. Undertake these heartily, and grace will be given to feed the sheep of Christ and His lambs.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, and there is intelligence, and there is power. Steadfast prayer and reliance upon the Spirit's leadership will bring illumination upon problems and needs as they arise. Power will be granted and efficiency assured. "Behold, God Himself is with us for our Captain." Let all praying souls be lovingly urged to sustain the work by incessant intercession and supplication. "Our sufficiency is of God, who hath also made us able ministers of the new covenant." Let there be no failure of faith or faithfulness. "All things are yours."

"Great Spirit, make thy wonders known,
Fulfill the Father's high decree,
Till earth, the might of hell o'erthrown,
Shall keep her last great jubilee."

CHAPTER V.

CHILD EVANGELISM.

JESUS must have been the busiest man who ever lived. He had sermons to preach, the blind and the lame and the sick to heal, the dead to raise, and the sins and the burdens of the whole world to carry. Yet He had time to gather the children in His arms.

The conscientious pastor is indeed a busy man.

“To serve the present age,
His calling to fulfill,”

it really does need all his ransomed powers, to do his Master's will. Yet the pastor who is too much occupied with the soul welfare of the adults of his congregation, to take an interest in the spiritual welfare of the children, is to be pitied. For did not Christ say of him who should neglect one of His little ones, “It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea?” I once heard a preacher, in speaking of a series of meetings which a brother minister had just closed, say,

CATCHING MEN

"O yes, he received fifty into the Church, but they were mostly children." Strange that he did not say, "best of all, they were mostly children." A noted evangelist said, *when children were seeking to reach the altar, "Stand aside, men; let those children come. They have a lifetime to serve Christ; you but a fragment of time."* The pastor who closes a year of revival effort, and has failed in reaching the children of his congregation, however many adults he may have enrolled, has at least been very shortsighted; for had he looked ahead but a single decade, he would see that his first work should be to place in careful training boys and girls who, at the end of these short years, should become the solid Christian workers in the Church.

Are we treading on thin ice nowadays when we speak of child conversion? There seems to be a plea for a return to primitive religion. Surely John Wesley was not afraid to speak of the conversion of a child. He partook of the communion himself when he was eight years old, and understood the ordinance. As soon as a child knows "I ought" from "I ought not," why can not he understand conversion? I have seen children in the primary department who had as vital intelligence concerning the witness of the Spirit, and forgiveness of sin, and faith, and repentance, as a theologian could have. The Catholics and the

CATCHING MEN

Episcopalians, and some Presbyterians, teach their young children their doctrines and the meaning of their Church ordinances. Why could not the Junior Leagues and Endeavor Societies do more of this work? I like to think of the Junior League and the Sunday-school as the twin angels of the Church, like the cherubim above the altar, with wings spread tip to tip, guarding and caring for the children.

The Sunday-school was originally intended for the children of the poor, but it has been said that it is now the chief instrumentality upon which well-to-do Church members depend for the spiritual upbuilding of their children. They present their children at the Sunday-school, and thus "press the button," and the Sunday-school teacher is supposed to do the rest.

Is old-fashioned family religion obsolete? Have early trains and late dinners crowded out family worship? If so, what a mighty responsibility rests upon the Sunday-school teacher! Can it be that the mother's knee is no longer the child's first altar of religion? Is it true that the modern mother says she can enjoy the Church service so much better without the restless, fidgety little ones; why torture them with a mere form? The sermon is unintelligible to them. Much is said nowadays about the hard lines which fell to the children of a generation ago because they were

CATCHING MEN

compelled to attend preaching service, perhaps twice on Sunday.

I heard of an old-fashioned preacher who came into the great city to preach for his son. He prefaced his sermon by saying, "As has always been my custom, I will begin my sermon by a five-minute talk to the lambs of the flock." And there were just two lambs under fifteen years of age in the congregation of five hundred. Is the family pew a thing of the past?

I heard a prominent Sunday-school teacher of children say recently at a Sunday-school convention held in Chicago, "I do not advise the children of my class to attend service previous to the hour of Sunday-school. If they do, I ask them to go out and run around the block, so as to be less restless during Sunday-school." If the children are more and more losing sight of the fact that this is the place "where God's honor dwelleth," then the evangelistic note must be sounded more clearly in the Sunday-school. It is now or never, in reaching boys and girls from twelve to fifteen years of age.

During our pastorate at First Church, Chicago, a young business man who had a class of restless boys, went one evening to the Methodist social union, and listened to an address given by Bishop McDowell upon soul-winning. He made a resolve while there that he would no longer study "the art

CATCHING MEN

of soul-winning," that he would no longer study methods of personal work, etc., but that if he lived to see the morning light, he would win a soul for Christ. He started down-town in the morning, and went first to the store of Carson, Pirie, Scott & Co., where one of his boys was employed as a cash-boy. He found that the poor, pale-faced boy who lived in the center of the city, with no one to care for him, was in need of a vacation, so he went to the manager, and asked that he have a week's rest. He took him to Evans-ton, where he boarded, and gave him the use of a bicycle, and told him to roam about the lake-shore, and rest. When night came, he taught him with the tenderness of a mother the way to Christ. The following Sabbath, when the pastor asked if any would unite with the Church, this boy walked manfully forward, and gave himself to the Church. This was the first fruit of this Sunday-school teacher's resolve. Before two months had passed, every one of his fourteen boys had been won for Christ and the Church, and before the winter closed, more than fifty Sunday-school scholars came into the Church.

It is the "This one thing I do" in the teacher that wins. We can not tell one another how to win the children. Any method that succeeds is the right method.

No wonder this is called the age of the emanci-

CATCHING MEN

pation of childhood, for never has there been so much attention paid to children as now. Thousands of children's books, children's newspapers, children's columns in all the papers, children's Sundays, kindergartens, children's societies, wholesale stores filled to overflowing with children's toys, playgrounds and parks, and picnics and festivals. All this is but the brightness of the same star which shone above the manger of the Christ Child. Yet we must not let the pendulum swing too far over toward a love of luxury, forgetting the unselfish spirit. Does not the average child of to-day receive more indulgence, and more in the way of gifts and rewards in one year, than the child of a generation ago received throughout his childhood? The wise Sunday-school teacher teaches that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

The ancient Spartans taught their children the most rigid self-denial, from their earliest infancy onward. This feature had much to do with giving the Spartans their powers of bravery and endurance. Dear Mrs. Zebedee wanted her children to have a good seat, one upon the right hand, and the other upon the left of Christ, in His kingdom; but He said, "Are you ready to drink the cup of which I shall drink, and to be baptized with the baptism with which I shall be baptized?"

As parents and teachers, we must live for Christ so sweetly, and teach Him so attractively,

CATCHING MEN

that the children will naturally say, "Mother, Teacher, I want the Christ life which you are living and teaching." Why can not He be our abiding Guest in the home, in the school, in society, and where not? Here is the dream of a busy housewife: "I imagined, the other day, that the dear Christ came to be my Guest in person. It was a day of many cares, and I thought He came alone, without the apostles. My first thought was for the bill of fare; but upon that I was at ease, for I knew the simpler it was, the better it would please Him. He would never find fault if the things were not exactly to suit the taste. And then I thought, Where should I seat Him at the table? How I would like Him to sit next to myself. I would so like to whisper in His ear and ask Him, 'why,' about some things, but that would be selfish. It would be grand for Him to sit next my husband, and tell him the very words He would wish him to speak in order to help Him win the world to Himself; but I thought how nice it would be to have Him sit next my daughter; and how beautiful to have Him sit next the baby, and place His hand upon his head, and say, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.' But, best of all, I would like Him to sit next my son who will soon leave the home nest and go to college halls, and say sweetly to him, 'There shall no temptation befall you but such as you shall be able to bear,

CATCHING MEN

and I will with the temptation provide a way of escape.' And then I thought, What should we talk about? And He seemed to say, 'Go right on talking as you would if I were not here.' And I had to say, 'My precious Guest, it would not be appropriate with You here.' And I thought He was grieved and said, 'Lo, I am with you alway.'"

Can we not make this great, evangelizing Guest more welcome in our homes? Is He a real presence with our children? Does He sit beside us as we teach the way to heaven?



CHAPTER VI.

DECISION DAY IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

BY J. WILBUR CHAP-
MAN, D. D.

It is appropriate that the preceding chapter be followed by a contribution upon child evangelism from the pen of Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman, to whom we all owe so much in the evangelistic work of our own time. He emphasizes one of the best opportunities for soul-winning in all Christendom; namely, Decision Day in the Sunday-school.

IF a farmer were to occupy all his time in sowing the seed and make no provision for the gathering of a harvest which he would have a right to expect, we should think him bereft of all reason. There are certain laws governing the sowing of seed, the watching for growth and development, and the reaping of the harvest. It is likewise true that there are certain well-defined laws concerning the use of God's Word in teaching and preaching. It is the good seed indeed, and the heart of a child has always been found to be particularly good ground upon which it may fall.

CATCHING MEN

There is a clear promise in the Bible that God's "Word shall not return unto Him void, but shall accomplish that which He pleases and prosper in the thing whereunto He hath sent it." If, therefore, there are few conversions and the harvest in the Sunday-school is not gathered, the responsibility for failure can not be with the Lord of the harvest, but must be with those of us who are supposed to be the laborers in His harvest-field. I can find no reason in God's Word why there should not be a constant ingathering of the children and young people into the kingdom of heaven, why there may not be frequent harvest seasons and oft-repeated Decision Days. In order that Sunday-school workers may be led to expect and work for such seasons of blessing, this message is sent forth.

It is necessary, first of all, that there should be certain propositions stated and accepted before we may be expected to gather the results of our work.

First. It must be accepted as true that when a child has reached the age of accountability, where he may intelligently accept or reject Christ as a Savior, he needs Christ in order that he may be saved. "There is none other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved." This text applies to a child having reached the age of accountability as well as to those older in years.

CATCHING MEN

If we do not accept this statement we shall not be much concerned about their souls.

Second. We do not know just when our children may reach the point of responsibility. It is said that in the Niagara River there is one point called "Past-Redemption Point," and that if one reaches and passes this place, he is hurried on to the Rapids, and the chances are all against his life being saved. We do not know at what age our children may pass this point in their lives.

Third. This being true, it is wise for us to present Christ to them as a Savior very early in their lives. It is said that a cannon-ball passing through a four-foot bore of the cannon receives its impulse for the whole course it is to travel. And the statement has been made that the Catholic authorities have said, "If you will give us your children for the first nine years of their lives, you can never win them away from us." It is therefore doubtless true that many a child receives impressions before he is ten years of age that determine the whole course of his after life. What an awful responsibility not to present Christ to him as Savior and Keeper!

Fourth. The history of the Church proves that many of those who have been the real pillars in the house of God came to an acceptance of Christ before the age of twelve years. So, whatever may be our individual opinion concerning the con-

CATCHING MEN

version of children, God has set His approval on the work and has said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

In an audience of five thousand people in a Western city I asked all who had accepted Christ between the ages of ten and twenty to rise, and it seemed as if the entire audience was standing. When those who had come between the ages of twenty and thirty were asked to stand the number was greatly diminished, not more than four hundred being on their feet. When the ages were changed to between forty and fifty, there was not more than a hundred standing, and when it was suggested that all who had accepted Christ between the ages of fifty and sixty should stand there were only four in five thousand who stood to make such confession. I am aware that this may not have been an exact test, for all may not have perfectly understood the call, but it can be proven by the statistics of the Church that the majority of people come to Christ before the age of twenty, and if they do not come at this time the chances begin to run mightily against them.

Fifth. To put any hindrance in the way of their coming, or to be indifferent to their acceptance of Christ, is a responsibility too grave to be borne by any of us.

The little son of a distinguished minister

CATCHING MEN

came to him one day to say that he wanted to become a member of the Church. His father thought he knew the boy, and said to him, "My son, you may not understand just what it means to join the Church." The child, however, assured him that he did. Finally, the father persuaded him to accept this proposition. He said: "We are just now going away for the summer vacation. When we come back, if you still wish it, we will then take you into the Church." This was not according to the boy's desire, but he yielded. The summer passed; "but," said this minister, "when I came back in the fall I came back without my boy. He died in the summer days." Doubtless the child was accepted of Christ because of his desire, but I am firmly convinced that he ought to have been in the Church, and the father believes it, too, to-day.

There are those who will not come to Christ if they are not urged to do so in childhood. In one of the cities of New York a minister arose in one of the meetings to say: "Let me tell you of a playmate of mine, a little girl. There was a special service in the school of which we were both members; an appeal was made which resulted in my own conversion. This girl was even more deeply moved than I, but there being no one to lead her to a decision, she left the school. I met her years after in Paris, when I asked her

CATCHING MEN

if she ever became a Christian. With a sneer on her face, that had once been wet with tears, she said: 'Why, I never think of it, and have not for years. I have clearly made up my mind that I shall never be a Christian.' What God in His mercy may do for her before her life's journey ends I can not say, but there was a time when, as a child, one touch of helpfulness would have led her to a decision."

Sixth. When you lead a child to Christ, as a rule the work does not stop with that one little life. Others have been won indirectly by that one. Characters have been transformed and entire homes have been changed by the conversion of children.

I was preaching in an Ohio city, when I had one night pointed out to me in the audience one of the leading business men of the State. His wife sat with him, and between them their one little child. I have never had more indifferent or inattentive auditors than the gentleman and his wife; they paid no attention to either speaking or singing, but the little child scarcely took her eyes from me. The meeting closed, and they went home; the child's heart had been touched. When she climbed up into her father's arms to say good-night she said to him, "Papa, I wish you would be a Christian so that I could be one too." What the sermon and the song had failed to do, the child

CATCHING MEN

accomplished. And before they slept that night both the father and the mother had yielded themselves to Christ.

It is not impossible that a "Decision Day" in the Sunday-school might mean entire households saved. If we have been faithful in our work as teachers and superintendents there are certain things we have a right to expect from God.

First. That He will honor His own word. If you have presented the plan of salvation to your scholars and stand ready to be used of God to help the scholar to a confession of Christ, you have a right to expect that He will set His seal upon your work.

Second. If you have presented Christ to your scholars, you have a perfect right to believe that the Spirit of God will witness to Him and make Him a power in the life of your scholar, for this is His work.

Third. You have a perfect right also, these conditions being fulfilled, to look for and expect the conversion of the scholars of your class.

THE NAME.

The day in the interests of which this message is sent forth may well be called "The Decision Day in the Sunday-school." It would be perfectly natural to expect conversions constantly, and if our schools were as God would have them be, our

CATCHING MEN

children would come as naturally into the kingdom of God as the sun rises in the morning and sets at night. But it is a wise thing, even if this be true, to appoint certain days when decisions may be wisely and strongly urged. These days may be more or less frequent, as the workers in the Church may elect, but ought certainly to be observed each year, although in some schools they are held as often as once a quarter, and always with blessing.

Let the following rules be adopted, or modified, so as to meet the needs of the various communities, and the writer can assure those following them that the efforts will certainly be crowned with success.

1. Plan and pray about the time you set apart, and let it be far enough in the future to prevent anything coming in the way of its successful prosecution or standing before it as a hindrance.

2. When the day arrives let the pastor preach such a sermon as would lead parents to see their responsibility and to make the teachers understand their opportunity for marvelous service.

3. Appoint a prayer-meeting for the teachers at least half an hour before the time of the session of the school. In this meeting let special prayer be offered; first, for the teachers that they may be specially anointed for this special work; second, for the unconverted scholars. It is a good plan

CATCHING MEN

to have the names before you for special mention. In one school in Pennsylvania the pastor himself had secured the names of seventy-five of the scholars who had not accepted Christ, and, with all the teachers on their knees, he read over these names one by one until he could read no more because of the sobs of those who filled the room, and he told me when the results were tabulated that he did not believe there was one of the seventy-five that had not taken a stand for Christ.

4. Make the session of the school special in every way.

(1) Sing only such hymns as would produce a tender impression upon both scholar and teacher. Much of the so-called Sunday-school music would be inappropriate for such a day. Such hymns as "Just as I am, without one plea," "Nearer, my God, to Thee," "Jesus, Lover of my soul," and "Jesus paid it all," would be more helpful.

(2) Mark the attendance and take the offering of the school, so that nothing may be in the way at the close of the session when the special appeal is to be made by the pastor.

(3) Call on different teachers to pray briefly as they sit with their scholars, so that at once it may be understood that the session of the school is special, and that you are waiting much upon God about it.

(4) It is always best to dispense entirely

CATCHING MEN

with the regular lesson, whatever it may be. I know the objections urged against this plan, especially when the lesson seems appropriate, but I know also that nothing makes a deeper impression on the scholars than to have the announcement made from the desk that "there will be no special study of the lesson to-day, for we have a matter of greater importance before us." Such an announcement being made, you will find that there will be a kind of a hush fall upon the school, and this is the beginning of the blessing. Put absolute confidence in God, then do as has been suggested by some one else, "Having planned your work, work your plan."

THE PLAN.

First. Let the superintendent say that the day is special. Let him tell the scholars with all tenderness that he is concerned for them. Let him state briefly what they must do to be saved. If he has been much in prayer about it, God will use him and the scholars will be deeply impressed by the mere statement of the man who stands as their leader in the work of the Sunday-school.

Second. Let him then give the teachers an opportunity to make their plea. They know the scholars intimately enough to speak wisely with them. I remember one class in the Sunday-school where, as I entered the room, I saw the scholars'

CATCHING MEN

heads all bowed in prayer, and as I passed by I heard the teacher say, "O God, save my scholars to-day."

It is not a time for argument, but just an opportunity for the plain, tender statement of the way of life out of a full heart. It is well to have an acknowledgment card, which the teacher may use to secure the names of those who take even a slight stand for Christ, in order that it may be a matter of record. The following is a sample:

Acknowledgment Card.

I do acknowledge Jesus Christ as my Savior.

It is my honest purpose to serve Him all my life.

Scholar's Name

Address.....

Teacher's Name.....

Date..... Class No.....

It is natural that I should believe heartily in such a plan. I was a scholar in a Sunday-school in Richmond, Ind., when some one was making an appeal to the scholars to confess Christ by rising. The most of my class of boys were standing, and I was saying to myself: "Why should I stand? My mother and father are both Christians. I think I believe in Christ. For me to stand is not a necessity," when suddenly I felt

CATCHING MEN

a touch on my shoulder and my teacher, Mrs. C. C. Binkley, was saying, "Had n't you better stand?" And somehow she got her hand just under my elbow and seemed to lift me up. I shall never forget my standing that day. Whether I had been accepted of God before that day or not I can not say, but I do know that the deepest impression of my life was made at that minute, and, under God, my Sunday-school teacher was the channel through which the blessing came.

Third. When the superintendent has made his statement, and the teachers their plea, and record of those who desire to know Christ has been made by the signing of the Acknowledgment Card, then let the pastor take full charge, and, as if there had been no statement before, lay before the scholars the way of life, their need of Christ, and press home upon them the desirability of an immediate decision for Christ. Any method may be used to lead to a final surrender which may be commended by the denomination in which the Church is found. I remember a Methodist church in Brooklyn where at least one hundred scholars bowed at the altar, and also recall a Presbyterian school where the scholars, by standing one after another, signified their determination to serve Christ. It is a serious mistake not to keep a record of all the names of those who thus take their stand in the service.

CATCHING MEN

CARING FOR THE RESULTS.

What shall be done with those who have made a decision? This is a serious question, and can only be settled by the pastors, superintendents, and teachers. If allowed to drift, the action in the Sunday-school may mean very little; but if carefully nurtured, the greater proportion of those signing the Acknowledgment Card may be ultimately found in the Church.

In some cases they may be received at once into the fellowship of the Church, although it would seem better to form them into a special class and give them such instruction as they may need to become intelligent members of the Church. I have known of special cases where for two years the classes were thus instructed until the whole number had been received into the Church.

This whole method of the Decision Day is like the Scotch woman's promises in the Bible. After very many of them she had placed the two letters, "T. P.," and when asked for the meaning of the letters she replied, "They mean tried and proven." So it is with these suggestions. In many cities and towns throughout the country they have been put to the test, and God has set His seal upon them.

Only this in conclusion. Since it is so very difficult to lead strong men and women to a deci-

CATCHING MEN

sion after they have rejected Christ for many years, and since the natural time for one to come to Christ is in youth, as the Church's statistics will prove, it behooves us to lay hold upon these gracious opportunities given us of God to save the young, and if we should fail there will be perilous times before the Church in the future.

There are clear indications in these days of a coming revival which shall sweep over this land of ours, and carry blessing wherever the gospel is preached. Not the least of these indications is an increasing concern on the part of Sunday-school teachers for their scholars and a marked willingness on the part of the young people to come to Christ.

This message is sent forth with the prayer that God may make it a blessing to Sunday-schools everywhere, and that thousands and tens of thousands of children may speedily be won to Christ.



CHAPTER VII.

SOME REMARKABLE CONVERSIONS.

BY LILLIA S. BRUSHINGHAM.

WE have abundant evidence in our own times that the Lord's arm is not shortened that it can not save, nor His ear heavy that it can not hear. There are other Pentecosts than the one in Jerusalem. There is conviction for sin to-day as when Peter preached and men were pricked to the heart. The writer of the following chapter has culled some instances of blessed, joyful soul-winning among many in a pastorate of twenty-six consecutive years in one city. I may say that she herself had much to do, both in the homes of the people and at the altar of prayer, in leading these repentant souls to the Redeemer. It is possible that every pastor's wife in all Christendom may be consecrated to the great office of soul-winning and soul-culture. In this way the pastoral office may be enhanced and adorned, by glad companionship in the noblest possible service.

IN describing a few of the more marked conversions during our service in the Christian ministry in the city of Chicago, I know I am but reproducing experiences in the lives of many

CATCHING MEN

clergymen. This chapter is not intended to teach the "art of soul-winning," but it simply contains a few prescriptions which have cured some very precious sin-sick souls.

On a certain Sunday evening, Dr. Brushingham was preaching upon the subject, "Christ the Consoler." At the close of the sermon a woman poorly clad, with a beautiful yet careworn face, came forward asking the Church to pray for her. Friends gathered about her and prayed earnestly, but no light came. The pastor opened his Bible, and, kneeling before her, read passage after passage which might comfort her. She still was hopeless. Many grew weary and retired, but a few remained by her side, some of them young people from Western Avenue Church. One of the daughters of Mr. John Date (I can not now recall which one) who was kneeling next the woman, said, "Will you not pray now, thanking God for the little light you have—the light that brought you to this place?" She quickly complied saying, "O God, I thank you for the ray of light that led me here. It is growing brighter," and while the friends sang,

"I have laid my burden down,
Where the crimson waters flow"

she shouted, "It is all light, and I am saved!"

But a short year after she found Christ the

CATCHING MEN

Consoler, she died. Her death was the most triumphant we ever witnessed. Her husband, who was a gambler, was in the bridewell. The fifth babe had just been born, and the family were in sore distress. Dr. A. D. Tagart had attended her with the thoughtful care of a brother. He said she could live but a few moments. As she bade the little ones adieu she said, "I feel assured that my death will do more for you than my life could do." Then turning to her pastor she said: "Never again preach of death as a dark river. I see no river. I ask you one favor. When I have gone, before you place my tired body in the ground, will you let the casket rest for just a moment upon the altar rail of Fulton Street Church, at just that spot where the light came that night?" At the midnight hour in that humble home, as the spirit took its flight, we felt a strange, mysterious presence, while she told us in a clear voice what she saw. She held my hand firmly within her own, singing with us, "We shall meet beyond the river," and then she whispered, "I see light! Jesus! My Home!" We closed her eyes gently, feeling we were touching the temple of the Holy Ghost.

After eight years we returned to Fulton Street Church for a second pastorate. We noticed an active young girl in the Epworth League, and recognized her as one of the young children left

CATCHING MEN

by this sainted mother years before. I introduced myself—for she did not remember ever having seen me—and said, “Myrtle, do you remember your mother?” She said, “No, mamma died when I was too young to remember her.” I said, “Tell me how you have gotten along through these years.” She said: “When we were almost babies, we began working. After a little we were cash girls.” Then with a Christlike smile, she said: “In spite of everything, it has all seemed easy. Christ has helped me.” Christ the Consoler had answered her mother’s dying prayer. Whenever I hear a so-called liberal preacher tell us that heaven is not a place, it is simply a state, I say, “I would give more for the deathbed experience of Mrs. Werswick than all your doubtful theories; for she saw and described a place.”

In a series of revival meetings held in Fulton Street Church in 1883, The Chicago Praying Band were assisting Dr. Brushingham. A special service was being held for the Sunday-school. At the time I had a class of fun-loving boys from ten to twelve years of age, who very readily answered “Yes” when I asked if they would not go forward with me and dedicate their lives to God. They knelt on either side of me, a half dozen of them. The boy kneeling at the end of the chancel was poorly born. His parents were bad, and he was thoroughly corrupt. During the

CATCHING MEN

prayer he stole the money from the collection box which was within reach. His history I have never been able to follow, but three of the boys were gloriously saved. After they were seated, Brother Manny, the leader of the Praying Band said, "Now, boys, can you give a testimony for Christ?" I trembled, wondering what they would say. As quick as a flash, Harry Gee, who was the spokesman, jumped to his feet swinging his cap. He had remembered the Golden Text of the day's lesson, which happened to be a short one, and he shouted out, "The battle is the Lord's," and sat down. The boys were organized into a probationers' club. No wonder that when the official board discovered the loss of their money, they exclaimed, "Presumptuous! to take boys, who understand so little what they are doing, to an altar." According to the time limit, we were removed from Fulton Street, and, after serving two other Churches, returned. There seemed to be a great stir in the ranks. A popular young man, member of the official board, Sunday-school superintendent, prominent in every department of the Church, had just married the beautiful daughter of the pastor, had received a flattering business promotion, and was about to remove to Brooklyn. He had been presented with a beautifully engraved gold watch from the officials, who were actually in tears, saying it was impos-

CATCHING MEN

sible to fill his place. Strange, but I could not refrain from saying, "And this is Harry Gee, one of the boys about whom you said, "'Presumptuous!'" Faithful through the years, and a most successful business layman. One of the boys became a minister of the Rock River Conference. Gems of the brightest hue for the Master's crown!

During the winter of 1901 we could see the spiritual leaven working among our young people. Scarcely a service was held without conversions. Street-meetings were held each Sunday previous to the Epworth League meetings, and a large number of unconverted persons followed into the services. At the close of the devotional meeting, one Sunday evening, Edwin Bunker called three young men around him and said, "Let us ask the sexton for the key to the pastor's study, and we will go quietly there, and get upon our knees and pray for Brother Brushingham during the first twenty minutes of his sermon, that he may reach hearts to-night as never before." A few such Leaguers in every chapter makes the Epworth League indispensable. When these four young men came in, near the close of the service, with faces shining, no one knew where they had been, but the pastor had felt an unusual unction in preaching. It is not to be wondered at that there occurred one of the most marvelous conversions in his ministry

CATCHING MEN

that night. A young man, pale and emaciated from the opium habit, a heavy drinker, a bartender from a Clark Street saloon, was strangely moved by a simple illustration in the sermon, which Mr. Moody often used concerning a dream in which a man thought a deep and dark river flowed between him and Paradise. He wandered up and down to find a crossing, but in vain. Finally he heard the voice of a little child saying, "Come this way, papa," and the glorified child led him home. The young man had a desperate struggle, for he had much to overcome; but that night he was delivered wholly from the power of appetite both for opium and liquor, and he has never touched either since. He became a soul-winner at once; grew strong physically, so that he took up hard work as a shipping clerk on South Water street. His parents resided in Milwaukee, and neither was a Christian. He had a feeling that they must be saved upon the self-same spot where he found the light, so he sent for them to visit him and remain a week. He had asked the Church to set apart a certain time in prayer for them, and when they accompanied him to the service, his every breath was a prayer. The mother yielded at the first service, but the father seemed obdurate, until all had left the church except the sexton and two or three others. Then father and son fell upon their knees, the father

CATCHING MEN

saying, "Charlie, I can't," and Charlie with his arms about his father's neck pleading with him to be reconciled to Christ. The stubborn heart finally yielded, and was beautifully humbled. Both parents returned to Milwaukee, and established a family altar. Their next visit to Chicago was to attend the wedding of their son Charlie Lowell, who married a beautiful Christian girl, and both are now members of a North Side Church.

In the old First Methodist Church of Chicago, situated in the very center of the business section of the city, no evangelistic work tells as well as the handing out of tickets of invitation to the throngs constantly passing the building. A kind word and a ticket have been the means of leading hundreds from this wicked section into the kingdom. When we get the final result up yonder, and hear the number who will say, "I am here, because a ticket was handed me upon the corner of Clark and Washington Streets, Chicago," how we shall rejoice in having been given the opportunity of doing this seemingly humble work!

"Outdoor evangelism" is an important factor in down-town work. While the young people were singing outside the main entrance on Washington Street previous to the evening service, the usual crowd stopped and listened, and the workers passed quietly around with invitations for the

CATCHING MEN

sermon. One man, who took a card and followed in, was Mr. G. Welcome, a notorious saloon character from the stockyards district. He had been drinking heavily for years, but had just been upon a prolonged spree. He had not been inside a church in fifteen years, although he remembered having had a praying mother in his childhood. His appearance that night is never to be forgotten. He had on a negligee shirt torn open at the neck, and, with hair uncombed, he was as hilarious a looking character as one ever sees upon Clark Street. The pastor made some tender allusion to a praying mother, which reached his heart, and he went to that oldest Methodist altar in the city of Chicago and yielded himself to Christ. He became perfectly sober, and before he left the building his entire appearance had changed. His conversion was in 1900. Since then no drop of liquor has ever passed his lips. He is a useful layman in one of the large South Side Churches, holding official relation in the Sunday-school. He said, but recently, he remembered that he owed the saloon-keeper a bill for that last prolonged spree, so he went in to pay it. He said he loved the saloon-keeper, who had been many times a friend to him. He paid the bill, then with intense earnestness preached a sermon upon Christ's power to save from sin. The saloon-keeper, with moist eyes said, "Welcome, I would never have believed

CATCHING MEN

that any power could have made you a sober man."

Dr. Brushingham was preaching one summer's evening from the text, "There shall be no more sea." During his discourse, he used a simple illustration of a boat without rudder or helm, drifting upon the boundless ocean. Carrying the figure into human life, he said he felt that there was some young man in the audience aimlessly drifting, without hope, away from home, and the right, and God. Several times he repeated the words "drifting, drifting," and then asked, "Does not some one want a safe pilot into the harbor to-night?" Quickly a young man in the rear gallery rose to his feet, and walked firmly down the stairway, through the center aisle to the altar, and sobbed out his sorrowful confession. He cried: "Those words, drifting, drifting, are haunting me. I shall go distracted if I can not get them out of my mind." What a circle of praying souls clasped hands about that strange young man! No one had ever seen him before, but souls got in touch with the Infinite, and as the poor fellow sobbed out: "You don't know that I am an ex-convict. I just wandered over here from the convicts' broom factory. I am sure if you did, you would not be so earnest in trying to help me." Then the young men gathered the closer, and prayed him into the kingdom.

CATCHING MEN

He had served his sentence in Joliet. He had gone step by step into dishonesty, until caught and punished for forgery. Frank Casey became a valued member of Ada Street Church and Epworth League. The young people were organized into an Historical Club, and here he showed that he was in possession of a good education, and that he had much literary ability. He won the first prize among the young people for writing the best paper upon the life of Washington.

After about a year, he declared his intentions of visiting his mother in the East, just where he did not know, that he might show her what God had done for him. He started on an evening train. As the train reached Hammond, Ind., there was a collision, and as young Casey was passing from one car to another, his legs were pinioned between the cars and both crushed. When he was taken from the wreckage, he was conscious and said, "Send for my pastor," giving the correct address. He was carried into the nearest building, which proved to be a saloon. He opened his eyes, and saw where he was, and said: "Men, in the name of Christ who has saved me, carry me out of this place. Let me die in God's free air." They bore him through the doorway, and he breathed his last breath. The Methodist pastor, hearing the circumstance, took his body to the parsonage. The funeral was held, and his Chicago

CATCHING MEN

Epworth League Chapter placed a simple marble slab above his resting-place. The sad part of his history is, that no one has ever been able to locate his mother, but she will find him and know him, "when the mists have rolled away."

At a never-to-be-forgotten watch-night meeting in Ada Street Church, a Scandinavian woman named Mrs. Hansen, with her friend, came in from curiosity. Both women were converted, and immediately Mrs. Hansen felt a Divine call to be a soul-winner. She kept a large sailors' boarding-house near the Chicago River. Sailors of the roughest type swarmed the place, and she began preaching the gospel to them at once. She established a Monday night preaching service in her parlors, inviting her pastor to preach, and the young people of the Church to sing.

When the first meeting was nicely under headway, people began to cough, and the room filled with smoke, and the odor of cayenne-pepper. A profane sailor had bought red pepper, and thrown it upon the stoves, thinking to break up the meeting. Strange to say, it did not affect Dr. Brushingham's voice in the least, and one of the singers, Mr. Thomas Quayle, was not affected, so he carried on the singing without the slightest choking. Those who were overcome, sat near an open window, and the meeting continued, without even an allusion to the distraction. The following Sun-

CATCHING MEN

day night, the man who had used the cayenne-pepper, came to the church, confessed, asked to be forgiven, gave his heart to God, and united with the Church. All who belonged to the Praying Bands, numbered as Band A, B, C, and D, will ever remember the marvelous conversions, one after another, of those rough sailors, brought about largely by the prayers and faith and works of Mrs. Hansen.

In a series of revival meetings held during the winter of 1886 at Ada Street Church, a saintly, white-haired man called Father Rusk arose, and, with streaming eyes, said, "Pray earnestly for a wayward son, whom I have not seen or heard from in twelve years." Quickly the altar filled with Christians eager to join in the petition he had asked for. Although Father Rusk was well known in the Church, and in many localities in the city, no one had ever before heard him mention a son. An hour of earnest, heartfelt pleading with God followed, during which Father Rusk, who was suffering with a chronic heart affection, which had baffled all physicians, became exhausted physically. It was feared that the excitement would end his life.

The meetings followed on night after night, until the Sabbath. At the close of the evening sermon, the pastor asked that every Christian in the room start at once, and invite some unsaved one

CATCHING MEN

to come to Christ. There was a general move throughout the audience. As Father Rusk started, just opposite him sat, what God had made for a man. Never before or since have I seen one so utterly unhuman in appearance—besotted, in rags, with scarred and blackened face, long matted hair tinged with gray, signs of delirium plain to all. Father Rusk went near him, peered long and closely into his bloodshot eyes, and then uttering a loud wail of anguish, he lifted the “broken reed,” and folded the wanderer to his bosom. With arms tightly clasped about him, he almost dragged him forward, whispering endearingly, “Charlie, my son, my son!”

The prayer of that father for that human wreck will never be forgotten upon earth or in heaven. The abundant Savior brought relief, and shouts of victory went up, because the evil one was cast out. But the man was too weak from exposure and dissipation to talk that night. Kind friends rallied to help the man. His body was cared for, and proper food and clothing provided. Then followed a recital of his long, pitiful wandering. For years he had not known a bed upon which to sleep. His only home had been a freight-car or the cold ground. He did not know his father was in Chicago, and he himself had not seen Chicago in years before. He never could tell how he reached Ada Street Church on

CATCHING MEN

the west side of the city. But we know. One of God's angels touched him, and said, "Would n't you like to be well, and strong, and happy once more?" and he led him gently home to his father's arms, "and he was made perfectly whole." Charlie Rusk became an earnest Christian man. He soon obtained employment in a restaurant, and was true to his trust. After a few years God took him to Himself, a polished gem for the Master's crown. Father Rusk has since gone to his reward. Mother Rusk still remains at the Methodist Old People's Home, waiting patiently to be called hence.

CHAPTER VIII.

CAN THE CITY BE WON FOR CHRIST AND THE CHURCH?

THE Protestant Churches of America are weakest where they ought to be strongest—in the cities. We seem paralyzed in the presence of the city problem. We have felt that foreignism is a great gulf fixed between us and the people. Dr. Wm. F. Warren, of Boston University, has clearly shown this to be a *non-sequitur*. He insists that there are millions of Christians to be had for the asking, that the Church may be re-enforced from the Orient, that tens of thousands of Christian households lack only a sincere and proper invitation to bring them within the fold of the Churches. Shall the invitation be given? The difference between these people and ourselves is very slight after all. Their children have all been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, just as ours have been. They have slightly different customs and institutions, and they speak a different language. But their tears and heartaches are genuinely American. Whoever reaches them first with the touch of love

CATCHING MEN

will win them. If the Church extends the hand of help and fellowship in their hour of need and loneliness, a sure response will come.

Our Roman Catholic brethren have a strong hold upon the cities—and why? Instead of putting a single priest in a great parish as we put a single minister, they put a whole corps of clergy and a company of sisters to come into personal vital touch with the people, and especially with the sick and the poor. Campbell Morgan became pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church in London, with a beggarly attendance at the services. Soon the building was crowded to the doors. He said: "Do not give me credit for this great work. Give it to the twenty deaconesses who have gone from house to house, heart to heart, pleading the cause of Christ." A priest of the Church of Rome says: "We have had very little anxiety in competition with Protestant Churches in our great cities so long as a single man was both preacher and pastor in a great parish. But the deaconesses with black bonnets and white ties, who find their way to the hearthstones of the people, will win."

More pastoral evangelism, more deaconess work, more lay evangelism, is the crying spiritual need of the city. We must do more, even to hold our own. We shall become extinct unless we are more active. A business man sat in his

CATCHING MEN

bond office the other day and said to me: "Preacher, you are right. Unless we get new customers, our business will die out. I have just received a report for the past month. It is better than usual. Here it is: 206 new customers. Some of the old ones have died and some moved away." He did not secure this patronage himself personally. His associates and employees were out through the country in every direction. Drop a live, working Church into any community on this continent, and it is sure to win success for Christ—not merely by opening a splendid temple of religion and saying, "Come" which is the program of the *inviting* Christ. We have also the pictures in the New Testament of the *insisting* Christ. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock."

"Behold, a stranger at the door
Is knocking still, has knocked before."

If Protestants would do great things in the cities, they must follow the Master's example and insist upon finding entrance to the hearts of the lost. Christ is a candidate for the palace of wealth and the hovel of poverty. He knocks at every door. He knows no distinction. He came to seek and to save, not the rich, not the poor as such, but the lost, always the lost.

We must have the spirit of self-sacrifice that brought Jesus from the glories of heaven. Some

CATCHING MEN

one has well said, "We must take Christ to the people if we expect the people to take Christ." A Brahmin said to a missionary, "You must be drunk with pity, if you would win India for Christ." Christlike compassion, and Christlike anguish for the suffering, sinning people pierce the hardest hearts, even when the sharpest arrows of argument gain no entrance to the mind. Bishop Thoburn sent missionaries home who insisted upon disputing with the pundits instead of presenting Jesus as the Savior from sin. See that poor woman sitting yonder by the well, a foreigner, outcast. A weary traveler comes over the dusty highway. Although the woman does not belong to His nationality, He speaks kindly and freely with her. This wondrous man deals with her conscience, lays bare the sin of her life, until He leads her to the fountain of salvation. It is Jesus at Jacob's well, preaching to a congregation of one, as He preached to Nicodemus, as He preached to the rich young ruler. Personal attention meant personal salvation then; it will mean personal salvation still.

The time has come to hurl at least a hundred times our present forces and funds into the evangelization of our great cities. We have been touching the fringe of the garment, the tip of the tassel, of the whole problem. There must be con-

CATCHING MEN

secration of men, women, and money, that shall appear colossal compared with all that has thus far been seen. The time has arrived when the city problem is given a small place in our great missionary conventions. It ought to have a large place. The city is the new frontier. The salvation of New York and Boston, Chicago and Philadelphia, should concern us more profoundly to-day than even the salvation of Bombay, Calcutta, Canton, and Tokyo. America is the battle-ground for the Christian civilization of the future. Not the old slogan, America for the Americans, but America for Christ, and Christ for the world through America.

In these days business men talk of millions as their fathers talked of hundreds. Everything is on a large scale commercially and industrially. We are not to do what the fathers did merely, but what they would do if they were in our places.

"New occasions teach new duties." The day of small things should not be despised, but these should be the days of great things, days when thousands upon thousands of consecrated lives, with millions of consecrated money, should be laid upon God's altar for the effectual evangelization of the city and of the world.

Our English brethren are putting us to the blush in the work of city-saving. I can do no

CATCHING MEN

better than to quote the account of my friend, Rev. Dr. Edward S. Ninde, as supplied by him to the *Michigan Christian Advocate*:

"It was the urgent conviction of the late Hugh Price Hughes that the unchurched masses belonged to any religious body that had the Scriptural audacity to go after them. The British Methodists have caught the spirit of this second Wesley, and are seeking the people with whole-hearted zeal. During the last few years, forty-one great halls have been erected in the various cities of England at a cost of eight million dollars; and the movement is still in its infancy. In these buildings Sunday after Sunday are gathered the largest congregations in world-wide Methodism, and the Wesleyans are recognized throughout the kingdom as far in the lead in solving the problem of how to reach the masses. The mission halls are centers of multiplied activities, but in this article reference will be made only to the evangelistic work.

"It is related that a young clergyman once went to Mr. Spurgeon in a very despondent mood, and expressed the fear that he had mistaken his calling, since the fruits of his ministry were so meager. 'Why, bless you, man! You don't expect conversions every time you preach, do you?' 'O no! Of course I do not look for that,' was the unguarded reply. 'Very well,' said Spurgeon,

CATCHING MEN

'that is the reason you do not have them. Expect conversions, work for them, and you will get them.' The Wesleyan Mission Hall superintendents are eager students of the blessed art of soul-winning, and if a Sunday passes without from five to twenty conversions, there are serious misgivings. Nothing that will contribute to the success of the services is neglected. The halls are beautiful in architecture, brilliantly lighted, with comfortable seats, and perfect ventilation. A staff of expert workers is in the vestibule to give a hearty greeting to every comer.

"To attract a crowd, all manner of advertising schemes are employed. In approaching a mission hall, to judge from the flaming posters everywhere displayed, one might infer that a circus had come to town. Nothing has impressed me more deeply than the fearless determination with which the Wesleyan ministers and laymen go after the people. If ordinary means fail, new plans are tried. Two years ago a preacher was stationed in a community where Methodism was almost defunct. He studied the situation for ten days and then opened his campaign. The principal theater was rented for Sunday afternoons. On the Saturday preceding the first service, an express wagon was hired, and the minister with a huge bass drum, and six laymen, each with a whistle, got in. Up and down through the main

CATCHING MEN

business streets of the city they drove, the preacher beating the drum and the laymen whistling. At each corner they stopped long enough to announce through a megaphone that a service would be held at the theater on the following day. When the hour came the place was packed, and hundreds were turned away. More than a score were converted. To-day in that same city, in charge of the 'drum parson,' there is a great Central Hall from which radiate religious influences that are transforming the whole place.

"The 'sandwich man,' an individual who carries, suspended from shoulder-straps, bill-boards before and behind, is a common sight in English cities. The task is so menial, that usually only men who are on the verge of starvation will accept it. But hundreds of Wesleyan laymen stand ready, on call of the superintendent, to perform this service, in advertising the mission. One Sunday in Leeds, a wealthy Methodist merchant in frock coat and silk hat, was parading the principal thoroughfare in this fashion, keeping to the street, for 'sandwich men' are not allowed on the sidewalk. A business associate whose sympathies were not in the line of religion, passing by, called out, 'Well, Brown, it must take lots of grit to do that.' 'I do n't know about the grit,' was the sturdy reply, 'but it takes grace.'

"Much emphasis is laid on the music. Usually

CATCHING MEN

hymn-sheets are provided for each service. Select gospel songs, and standard hymns that have a ring and a movement in them, are chosen. Full use is made of organ, piano, orchestra, and choir, but these are only adjuncts; the main feature is the singing of the people. I had a talk with Mark Guy Pearse last November, just after his return from America. He said many kind things about our country, and then added, 'But the singing in your churches is abominable.' He was quite right. In the English mission halls singing is at its best. One night I looked over a vast congregation and failed to see a single individual, old or young, who was not joining lustily in the hymn. So impressive was the sight that for a moment I forgot my personal duty, till I became uncomfortably conscious that several pairs of eyes were upon me, as if people were saying, 'Why do you not sing? Are you a heathen?' The mission workers are correct in their judgment that when unconverted men and women begin to sing the hymns of Zion, they have taken the first step toward Calvary.

"The sermons average thirty minutes in length. They vary in style according to the man. There may be rhetorical embellishment, scholastic reasoning, dramatic periods, but the supreme aim is never lost sight of. From the first word to the last, the distinct purpose is to bring uncon-

CATCHING MEN

verted people to an immediate decision for Jesus Christ. Nothing is permitted to becloud the main issue. One secret of the success of the Central Hall ministers is the fact that they have all had large experience in open-air preaching. Here is the crucial test of a man. When facing a crowd on a street corner, he may be very sure of this, if the sermon does not go, the people will. He soon learns to express himself in a clear, direct, incisive manner, and to rivet attention to the point he is driving at.

“But the Central Hall work would amount to little were it not for the enthusiastic co-operation of all the members. It is fully understood that these halls are evangelistic centers, and the superintendents emphatically declare that people who are not interested in soul-saving must seek Church fellowship elsewhere. There is no room here for those who are at ease in Zion. Mr. Collier, the energetic head of the Manchester mission, was making the rounds on a recent evening, of his numerous class-meetings. He found one where there was no unconverted person present. He at once broke up the service and sent everybody out on the street to waylay unsaved people and bring them into the hall. He abhors class-meetings where the saints gather to enjoy a feast in private, and where nothing definite is done to advance the kingdom of Christ. He expects every convert to

CATCHING MEN

be a worker, and week by week, opposite the name of each member, is some definitely assigned task. No wonder that in a district where a few years ago Methodism was almost dead, there are to-day nearly seven thousand loyal, enthusiastic members, eager to bring others to Christ.

“Much might be said of various evangelistic agencies in constant use, especially the midnight marches with brass bands, when not infrequently an audience of a thousand or more, many of them drunkards and harlots, will be gathered in a mission hall. Very often from fifty to a hundred will go into the inquiry-room; and the most encouraging fact of all is, that those converted on such occasions generally remain steadfast, and become active and useful members.

“There can be no doubt that the religious campaign of the future must be waged chiefly in the great cities. This is especially true of our own country, where increasingly the cities are becoming the strategic centers. Conditions in America are not quite the same as in England. The immense alien population and the growing influence of the Roman Catholic Church very seriously complicate the situation. A slavish adherence to old-country methods would certainly be unwise; but in the more important features, the policy pursued in Britain is admirably adapted to America. Most of all, we need to catch the spirit of our

CATCHING MEN

English brethren—that fearless determination
which

‘Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, It shall be done!’

“An aggressive forward movement will call for a financial outlay beyond anything we have hitherto known. But American Methodism is far richer than the British Wesleyan Church, and nowhere in the world are more liberal-hearted laymen to be found than among our own people. Let the need be clearly perceived; let it be understood that every dollar invested will yield a substantial dividend in the moral and spiritual upbuilding of the Republic, and the money will not be lacking. It is high time that we face the question of city evangelization with an intensity of purpose which will bring things to pass.”

CHAPTER IX.

SLUM MISSIONS.--STREET EVANGELISM.—MID- NIGHT MEET- INGS.

BY ERNEST A. BELL.



OUR Lord taught that we should go out in the streets and lanes of the cities, into the highways and the hedges, and "compel them to come in, that My house may be filled." Mr. Bell and his associates in Chicago have been actualizing this injunction of our Master. In response to my request he tells the thrilling story of conflict and victory in Darkest Chicago.

NO PREACHER or evangelist of fair ability need be without a good congregation of men to listen to his message. If there are more pastors, or men fitted for the pastorate, than there are Churches to hear them and support them, let these trained preachers and experienced evangelists go out into the highways as the Lord commands. There they will find hearers for their message. This applies, of course, particularly to cities and towns of considerable population. In our American cities and towns are many millions of un-

CATCHING MEN

churched and unevangelized people. If the men who solemnly testify before God and man that they have a Divine call to preach Christ's gospel, will industriously preach it to the people who will listen to them, they will be astonished how many churches and missions will soon be opened to them. They are under a sacred obligation to believe the gospel that they preach. All ministers of the gospel reiterate Christ's words, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." The preacher expects the drunkard and ex-convict to believe that God will provide for him, if he will only become a true Christian. The text means more than that. It means that the missionary or evangelist who will industriously seek the kingdom of God, by seeking to promote it, as well as to enter it and enjoy it, will be cared for. This is an article of the Christian faith as set forth in the Sermon on the Mount. This is one of the laws of the kingdom, an inexorable law, as certain as "The soul that sinneth it shall die," or any other law of God.

By this we do not mean that Christian Churches and individuals are free from the obligation to support those who give their whole time and strength to evangelism and the care of souls. But we do mean that, in ways worthy of Himself, God will move His people to supply the needs

CATCHING MEN

of His servant. Often the supplies will come in ways as wonderful as the feeding of Elijah; but ordinarily they will come in the quiet, providential ways in which God is constantly caring for all His people. These words seem to be necessary at the beginning of this chapter, because the problem of support for city missions, and especially all such work as is commonly called irregular, is a very constant and difficult one. Without a moment for lightening the obligations of Churches and individuals, especially such as are prosperous, we desire here to encourage every one who has been called of God to preach the Word, to pursue his calling as diligently as if he were employed by a bank or factory. We testify that he will surely find that God will lay it upon the hearts of some of His faithful Churches and faithful stewards to meet the needs of His faithful servant. Moreover, he will be inexpressibly gladdened by the direct blessing of God as he, by the Holy Spirit's help, directs the longing gaze of perishing souls to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. No evangelist who is really called of God will fail of unmistakable signs of the presence and co-operation of the Holy Spirit in his efforts to win the lost and restore the fallen.

While many theological professors are giving an uncertain sound on the inspiration of the

CATCHING MEN

Bible, Christ's atonement for our sins, the reality of miracles, and some deny the resurrection of the Lord, and depart from the faith altogether,—the slum mission, the street preacher, and the midnight evangelist witness constantly many infallible proofs that the inspired Book inspires despairing men, that the blood of the Crucified now takes away the guilt and pollution and slavery of sin, that the risen Christ here and now receiveth sinners, and transforms them, often in the twinkling of an eye. This is what Neander, the Church historian, calls the perpetual miracle of Christianity. There are other perpetual miracles of Christianity, in our judgment; such as the unfailing endurance of the Church, against which the gates of hell can not prevail, and the preservation of Christian character and Christian homes amidst all the fraud and pollution of the centuries. But these do not give such immediate demonstration of Christ's saving power to the ordinary observer. The transformation of criminals, drunkards, licentious men and women, opium habitues, and victims of cocaine and other drugs, is something that demonstrates to every man's common sense the invisible power of a mighty Savior from sin.

In Chicago, perhaps the best known of our rescue agencies in the slums is the Pacific Garden Mission at 100 East Van Buren Street. Here, every night in the week for more than twenty-

CATCHING MEN

eight years, the gospel has been preached by some ordained minister or accredited evangelist. A bright song service of evangelistic songs and solos precedes the sermon. After the sermon, from half a dozen to half a hundred redeemed men and women testify of the saving power of the Son of God in their own lives. Some are boys in their teens, away from home and parental restraint, who have been snatched from the mad whirl of the vicious life of the great city. One constant witness, who seems to be invariably present, is an old man who continued in drunkenness and wickedness until he had passed his threescore years and ten. Then he knelt at the altar of the mission, and was completely saved from drink, tobacco, and every evil habit. Though he is old, slightly educated, and a day laborer, his testimony is always very intelligent, bright, and interesting. Another witness for Christ's salvation is a former crook, whom the police of a dozen cities would not allow to remain twenty-four hours within their jurisdiction. Ten years ago this man, Dick Lane, who is ever ready to uncover his past that others may forsake their wicked past, came into this mission, accepted Christ, and was transformed by His free grace. For years he has held a position of trust in the office of a great daily paper. He owns his own home, has money of his own in the bank, and wonders with rejoicing at the trans-

CATCHING MEN

formation in his character and circumstances. Frequently the leaders of the meeting are themselves redeemed men, who have known the false pleasures of sin and the bitterness of its matured fruit. The mission is still under the direction of the devoted woman, Mrs. Clarke, who, with Colonel Clarke, her husband, founded it in what had been a beer-garden nearly thirty years ago. For nearly four thousand consecutive nights she has never failed to be in her place at the mission. She keeps a list of the names of all penitents who kneel at the altar, and has given instructions that this shall be placed in her coffin, when she goes to join her husband and her Redeemer in the house not made with hands. Some of the converts have become powerful soul-winners and preachers of the Word. Among these is evangelist William Sunday, who is well known in the towns of Illinois, Iowa, and other States, where he has been blessed in turning many to the Lord.

We have spoken particularly of this mission because of its long and conspicuous soul-saving ministry in the very heart of down-town Chicago. But this is not meant as a slight to other missions on the north, south, and west sides of Chicago. The momentous work of Jerry McAuley's mission, and the Bowery mission in New York, and other missions from Philadelphia to San Francisco, is a convincing proof of the presence of a glorious

CATCHING MEN

saving power in the midst of our own time and nation. The great results obtained among those who have plunged headlong into the grossest vices and crimes, should encourage all Christians and all Churches to prosecute evangelistic work assiduously in every community in the world.

INFAMOUS RESORTS WIPED OUT BY MIDNIGHT EVANGELISM.

In the summer and autumn of 1904 and 1905 a number of Chicago missionaries, evangelists, pastors, and deaconesses conducted midnight meetings in the most notorious street of the city, Custom-house Place, formerly known as Fourth Avenue. When the meetings began, there were about fifty infamous houses on the street, containing about seven hundred women of evil life. The meetings began about ten o'clock at night in the street, in front of the dives. The first preacher to speak was Pastor M. P. Boynton, of the Lexington Avenue Baptist Church, who asked the privilege of preaching a sermon to the foolish people who surged and thronged through that vestibule of hell. At times as many as two thousand persons an hour passed through this shameful street, which was lined with vile resorts for a long block and a half. The offer of salvation was freely and lovingly proclaimed, and listened to with respect and interest. On one occasion,

CATCHING MEN

two young men, university students, rushed up to one of the preachers as he walked away at the close of the meeting. With outstretched hands they grasped him by the hand and said, "Sir, we thank you. You have kept us from sin to-night." The preacher was Rev. J. E. Ensign, who had formerly preached in the open air at Coney Island.

It was at Mr. Ensign's suggestion that the midnight work was begun in this street, and he was faithful to the work during the two seasons, until the work was no longer necessary in this place. Fully two hundred persons shared the work of the meetings. They were moved by one spirit, and we doubt not that that spirit was the Spirit of God. There was no human leadership or generalship sufficient to explain such unanimous effort on the part of hundreds of voluntary and unpaid workers.

Scores of repentant men knelt upon the stones of the street, confessing their sins to God and to His messengers. The whole company of depraved women in the resorts heard the singing and some of the preaching, and knew that the offer of God's salvation had come to them. Of manifest results, however, among this class, we have but little to record. One poor girl wailed her way out of the dive where she was virtually imprisoned, and made her way to a Rescue Home, where she was cared

CATCHING MEN

for and instructed in the way of salvation. Some other girls gave some evidence of change of purpose; but as to most of them, we are not likely to know in this world the results of our labor. We do know that God's Word prospers and accomplishes His will, inevitably and irreversibly.

The keepers of the evil resorts were at first very respectful and to a degree friendly. Fearful lest some of our workers would forget that the friendship of the world is enmity with God, I earnestly pleaded with them not to maintain such friendly relations with these wicked men and women as would constitute any semblance of hobnobbing with the devil. The wily managers of resorts were quite ready to make use of an unsuspecting mission worker to further their own ends with the city administration. Our work soon began to cut into the filthy revenue of the resorts. One manager besought us not to hold the meetings in front of his place so often, or he could not pay his rent.

During the second summer the meetings increased very greatly in power. Sometimes they continued from ten o'clock at night until three in the morning. Workers reached their homes after daylight, with hearts almost bursting with joy because many sinners had repented. Sometimes as many as fifty workers were engaged in the same block at once, holding four simultaneous meet-

CATCHING MEN

ings. Thousands of misguided men had their attention called to the cross of Christ and the holy life at every meeting. The revenues of the resorts were seriously diminished. One manager, who had been misled in his boyhood and genuinely regretted the loathsome life he was leading, said to us, "If you Christian people keep coming, we have got to go." The Christian people kept coming.

With our increasing spiritual power and victory, keepers of saloons and resorts became alarmed for their revenues and began to offer resistance to our work. They hired express men to drive into our meetings, and organ grinders to disturb us with their noise. On one occasion a cab-driver was paid to drive at high speed into our meeting, where deaconesses and many Christian women were assisting in the work. Several times automobiles were stationed near us and made as noisy as possible in order to harass us. As we were proceeding lawfully, under legal permits from the police department, we called upon the police for complete protection. While an American patrolman was on the beat we had no trouble, but a foreign-born officer showed us considerable disfavor. We had little doubt that he had accepted bribes from the keepers of resorts. The chief of police was entirely just and friendly and took all necessary measures for our protection.

At length, the managers of resorts, saloons, and

CATCHING MEN

gambling hells in this notorious block asserted that each meeting we held cost them \$250. They determined, as we learned from a trustworthy source, to give us "the worst of it," even if they had to engage thugs to "slug" one of our leaders. We were well aware of the danger we were incurring, and we constantly called upon the Lord for His unfailing defense. At last, such representations were made to the chief of police as induced him to order our meetings stopped at ten o'clock, on the consideration that we were disturbing the sleep of lodgers in hotels two blocks away!

Thereupon, accompanied by Mr. Arthur Burage Farwell, Miss Lucy Page Gaston, Deaconess Lucy A. Hall, and others, we called upon the chief of police, expressed our surprise at being stopped in our work, which was entirely lawful, and requested him to cleanse the street of resorts which were entirely unlawful. This he promised to do, on condition that we would not stir the newspapers or arouse public sentiment to compel him to do it. We accepted his word and awaited fulfillment. Two months later—namely, at Christmas, 1905—he notified the resorts that they must vacate at the expiration of their leases the first of May, 1906. During the intervening months the gamblers, managers of saloons and resorts, and some property-owners who made money out of the dives, raised a slush fund, employed an attorney, and

CATCHING MEN

used every device in their power to gain a continuance of their nefarious traffic in the heart of Chicago. When they approached Chief Collins on this subject he made oath by God that, if they had the wealth of Marshall Field, he would not tolerate their resorts after the first of May. No political or other influence could induce him to waver or to reverse his order. Some of the resorts have quit business, some keepers and inmates have gone to distant cities, some have combined with houses existing in other parts of the city. Vice in Chicago never received so staggering a blow as when this shameful block, at the center of business and transportation, between the post-office and Dearborn station, was cleansed of the abominable places which have stood there, protected by the police department, since the Chicago fire.

In illustration of what was said at the beginning of this chapter, it is fitting to say that, though almost all the workers in this midnight campaign are poor men and women, the support of all was provided in the good providence of God, neither was there any among us who lacked. As at Pentecost, we were filled with the Holy Ghost, and spoke the word of God with boldness, and our needs were all supplied. Lastly, but most emphatically, we wish to say that, like the power obtained at Pentecost, the power that we received came in answer to prayer. Prayer was observed

CATCHING MEN

all afternoon for weeks together at Beulah Home, a refuge for ruined girls—prayer that the power of God might deal with the shameful conditions in our city and in our city government. While the spiritual battle was fiercest, constant prayer was made for us at the Chicago Avenue Church (Moody's), at the Chicago Hebrew Mission, and at the house of prayer then maintained by the Christian Alliance. At the Park Avenue Methodist Church the whole congregation offered prayer for this work. In other Churches and missions our work was known, and was supported by the prayers of earnest souls. For every sinner that repented, for every wicked design that was defeated, for every infamy that has been destroyed, for every encouragement to praying, believing souls, we humbly, exultantly give glory to God.



CHAPTER X.

PREACHING THE EVANGEL.

BY C. L. GOODELL, D. D.

THERE is no more persistently successful pastor evangelist to-day than Charles L. Goodell, D. D., pastor of Calvary Church, New York City. Victor Hugo says it is the unexpected that happens. If there were a year in Dr. Goodell's ministry without a gracious revival, Victor Hugo's statement would apply. He always has a revival, it is always a successful one, and he is always his own evangelist. Not only does Dr. Goodell lead in the regular evangelistic work in his own church, but he is found among the many prominent New York pastors who have stepped beyond the bounds of their own pulpits and parishes, to evangelize the community and help to redeem the city by means of street evangelism and tent campaigns.

EVERY man who is preaching the evangel is an evangelist. There is no reason why a peripatetic should monopolize the name. In the New Testament sense the evangel is the good news that the whole Book promulgates. First a Messiah, a

CATCHING MEN

world Deliverer, foretold and expected, unto whom ^{1.} all the prophets testify: the Son of God become ^{2.} the Son of man, who shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for His law of whose kingdom and glory there shall be no end. We have not sufficiently exalted the King and His kingdom. We have not believed strongly enough in His present and ultimate triumph. We look about and see evil in our high places. All men seem to be selfish, and evil practices corrupt the good. How will it all end? If we have any doubt let us get back with the fearful whom Gideon could not use. We have no place in the ranks, for we shall fight the fight of the half-hearted and fill the place of a better man. If you preach that the world is to wax worse and worse, and after all our preaching the world is to fret away the borders of the Church, do not call that message an evangel. Church history proves that the ages when that doctrine has been most preached have been followed by spiritual declension of the most serious sort. Preach a victorious, not a defeated, Christ—a world Leader who is mounting steadily and irresistibly to the high places of human hope. The cry of defeat never stirs like the shout of victory. The first note in the evangel must be the note of unconquerable faith. People need to know that Christ is not dependent upon their poor

CATCHING MEN

suffrages. They need to get their eyes open to His matchless power. He is Creator, and He shall be Judge. What we thought will make no difference as to the facts at the last assize. We do so much pleading, and we assume so much of the "eternally feminine," that it needs, for the stirring of men who have blood in them, the bold, strong presentation of authority and power. Hear Christ saying, "All power is given unto ME in heaven and in earth." He not only claimed it for Himself, but He showed men that He was King by right of His royal nature. So Pilate said when he saw Him in His deep humiliation. A diadem was on His brow that shone through the matted thorns, and that shines to-day with ever-increasing splendor. All art and literature, all moralities and philanthropies, hail Him King—the unmatched Galilean; He, the power of every righteous throne; He, the menace of every evil man and method, hastening them to their own undoing, and waiting in patience till the world shall own Him King of kings. Stand the Man of Nazareth against all other men and gods, and marvel at the measureless altitude of His uplifted head. Bring the dusty pilgrims who have sought through all the ages for the Universal King that they may bring their homage. Hear them say, "We have seen His star, and are come to worship Him." Turn the light on Him. Let critics cavil, let pessimists wail,

CATCHING MEN

there is one sufficient answer: it is the "crystal Christ." Let us thunder out the climax of that first pentecostal sermon: "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ." The second note in the evangel is the humiliation of Christ. I see my own great want ^{2.} by the length of the chain let down to reach me. It is when I measure myself with the Christ of the cross that I see how miserable and undone I am, and it is then that I am most persuaded of His Kingship. If my lost condition was such as to send this Royal Soul to the cross for the love He had for me, it ought to break my heart not to make my answer a quick and glad "I will!"

You need not tell me I am a sinner. I know it
when I look at Him. If He is the measure of a
man, O wretched man that I am! I have seen hundreds who said, "I am as good as other men," and they sat unmoved to all my appeals, but when they were minded to go with me to the cross, and let me show them Him who hung upon it, then there was no more spirit in them, and they said, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Now we are at the heart of the evangel. Here is good news indeed. Preach it as if it were. Let ours be the joy which the messenger has when he bears the pardon of a governor to the condemned. Let ours be the haste of one who fears he comes too late;

CATCHING MEN

and let every word declare the abounding delight of one who carries life to those who were dead. Dawson quotes Dr. Burton as saying in his Yale Lectures: "It has been the sin of my life that I have not always taken aim. I have been a lover of subjects. If I had loved men more, and loved subjects only as God's instrument of good for men, it would have been better and I should have more to show for my labor under the sun."

There are two things which must characterize the preaching of the cross: First, a man must himself be crucified. Not simply that he has known an hour when his earthly ambitions were ~~+~~nailed to the cross, but rather that he shall daily prove himself to be the self-less man—one who counts not his own life and ease dear unto himself. Men speedily find out that he is ready to be sacrificed for them, and when the world sees the marks of the nails in the palms of the Church it will be no longer faithless but believing. The second, and irresistible, force of the evangel is ~~+~~in the heart-tone that thrills it. If you do not care for men, and "care to care," you can not speak the Word with power. You are a hireling, and the sheep are not yours, and they know it. It is the voice that has laughter and tears in it that move men's souls, and it does it because it is the voice of human sympathy. That is the note which the weary world misses in so much that is

CATCHING MEN

said from the pulpit. Years spent in college and seminary in gathering information about the history of the Church and the Book lead unconsciously to the exalting to the first place of matters purely erudite. It is enough to humiliate the scholar to find by actual experience what a small part the things he has learned play in the work he is called to do. They are not without great value, but they gain that value when relegated to the place they ought to occupy—that of helps and not ends. I have seen the soldiers in Fortress Monroe at their round of daily toil. As I passed through the schoolroom I found them busy with ballistics. I saw great curves, and found them applying the principles of algebra and trigonometry to their trajectories; but a little later there was the booming of cannon, and I found that the men who drew curves in the morning were proving them in the afternoon by actual experiment. They were actually doing the thing which would be required of them in the thick of the fight. It is a thousand pities to have men teach divine gunnery who have never made a successful shot against the enemy. There is no immediate danger that our theological students will know too much, but there is a very imminent danger that their knowledge will be theoretical rather than available. In the present crisis of the Church the most important chair in our

CATCHING MEN

schools is that of practical theology, and the man to fill it is the one who has shown by years of success that he knows how to do the thing he is set to teach. We ask our young men to be masters in revival work. Who shall instruct them in that most important part of their ministry? Certainly not the man who knows so little about the practical details of such work that he is as helpless in a revival as a landsman in command of a man-o'-war.

I have said that it is the heart-note that rises above every other in the proclamation of the evangel. Only the man with the yearning soul is of any account with the evangel. If he can sleep nights and be content days, whether men heed his message or not, it proves that he has a stony heart. Whatever outward perfections he has, they are those of a marble statue and not of a living man. Why are we not burning with the zeal that consumed our Master and sent Him to nights of prayer and Gethsemanes of anguish? Is it our faith or our practice that is at fault? Do we believe men are lost and that Christ alone can save them, or is it that men are conscious that our lives are too indolent and our lips too impure to sound so high a note? How insidious are the foes of a minister! Is he trimming his sails for some official port? What a miserable voyage he will make! Has he ambition to be

CATCHING MEN

known as a great preacher by critics of the form of things? How soon he will lose the power of his message! Does he seem to say, "Look at me and see how scholarly I am?" Then his critics will go out as from any other performance, and the spiritual will say, "There was no cross and no Easter, and we saw but a little man where we hoped to see Jesus only." How sloth cuts the nerve of him who brings the evangel! If he has a corner in the study, or hides on the sofa, have at him! You two can not occupy the same pulpit. Do not dawdle. Be in dead earnest, or the fine, subtle power of your ministry is ended. If you have the heart-note, its expression will be direct and genuine to the last degree. How many preachers are conscious of one vocabulary for use in the pulpit and quite another which they use in daily intercourse, in the questions which they discuss with men and the revelations which they make to their friends of their purposes and desires! It was said of Henry Clay that he made his friends with one vocabulary, and lost the Presidency with another. We wonder now that such bombastic, high-flown sentences, full of sheer buncombe, passed for great speeches a century ago. Our age will have none of them. It knows that the language which a man uses when he talks about the things which interest him in daily life is the language that reveals the man. I listened in the

CATCHING MEN

courts to a man pleading for the life of his client, and I marked the words he used. Every one the shrine of a thought. Every one so simple that the most unlettered man in the jury knew its meaning. His message swayed him. He felt that it was life or death that day, and the dread alternative was in the venture of his speech. What a lesson for him who pleads for souls! What an impertinence our sesquipedalian words really are in the sight of God and of thoughtful men! If one thinks that simple, soulful words are easily spoken, and that they are the sign of lack of preparation, let him try to use them, and he will discern his mistake. The great masters, and not the tyros, are the men of simple speech. Just in proportion as one's theme fills the soul of the cultivated man will his presentation of it become powerful. "It is with words as with sunbeams—the more they are condensed, the deeper they burn." Then, too, we are quite inclined to talk of our spiritual attainment in superlatives. We must use a smaller vocabulary or get a larger experience. The age is a direct one. It is the age of small books, of short addresses, of thirty-minute sermons—"with a leaning to the side of mercy." When a man talks as if he meant it, his soul flashing out at his eyes, his words throbbing with deep concern, art and method forgotten in the tremendous sweep of the evangel over

CATCHING MEN

his own soul, then men are likely to listen and to come again. Preaching is the art of persuasion in its highest form, and nothing that gives power with men is alien to it.

Some objections to the continuous presentation of the evangel in the form which men call revivals ought to be met. There are two methods with which every minister should be familiar: The first is sometimes called "a perennial revival." That doubtless means a constant condition of spiritual alertness in which it would be in perfect harmony with the spirit of things for one to make profession of his purpose to lead a Christian life. It goes without saying that this is the normal condition of every Christian Church, but something more than this is necessary if the Church is to do its greatest work in any community. A certain intensity which is the result of cumulative thought and effort is necessary to bring the Church to its highest efficiency and the community to the realization of its need. The concentration of the entire strength of faith and effort upon a particular case produces marvelous results. It is the bringing of stick to stick and fire to fire for a great conflagration. Nothing can be more reasonable and philosophic than special and protracted revival services. It is the plan adopted to push any great reform. It is the method of every political campaign. There is a power in it that it is a

CATCHING MEN

wonder even to those who have most used it. But it must be pressed with holy daring. It must not stop short of victory. Many a pastor has been defeated because he dared too little. A week of such services may be apparently fruitless, but we have never known, in our own experience, a month to pass without a great victory. The energy which will make a month gloriously successful will be of comparatively little effect when spread over a year. The preacher of the evangel in such a service must himself be under the power of the Holy Spirit. He will be consumed with the zeal of his great task, and being so aroused will be able to stir those with whom he consorts. There will be little objection to overcome on the part of wordly officials when their pastor's heart is afire. The aroma of prayer will be about him, and all men will take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus. The conditions must be peculiar that do not call for at least a month of special revival services in every Church. If that should occur in Methodism it would be worth a hundred thousand souls through the stretch of her vast borders. Of course it will be said that such method is mechanical and forced, and, equally of course, such a remark will reveal lack of experience in the one who makes it. God is always ready. It is His people who are waiting. The air is full of Pentecosts which have never come

CATCHING MEN

down because there was no resting-place for the cloven tongues. The thoughtless may talk of working up an interest, and such a work of grace is called a "man-made revival," but we have always found God ready to honor the work of men done in harmony with His will as revealed in His Word. It is a fair question to ask whether the man-element is more apparent in the stagnation of a dead Church or in the efforts which make it possible for God to crown the work of faith with His sanction and abundant blessing. The preacher of the evangel must first commune with God until he gets the burden of souls upon him. He must be in love with the souls for whom Christ died, and count everything secondary to the winning of them. It is not enough to please men. It is not enough to stir them. They must be *won*. It is the only test of our ministry, the test of its spiritual power.

There is truth in the words we hear from honored sources: "Evangelism is bringing the evangel or gospel into contact with the unsaved, and it is for contact, not conversion, that the Church is responsible." But that statement of the truth is so partial that it is responsible for many a failure. Men have taken refuge in it from the result of a nerveless and half-hearted deliverance of the truth. God only can bring final deliverance to the soul, but until we have

CATCHING MEN

trodden the path toward the Promised Land to where the brine of the Red Sea is flying in our face, we have no right to stand still and wait His power. For preachers who have eyes to see a new day is dawning. The signs of the times are blood-red in their intensity, and no man who has any fitness to wear the prophet's garb or exercise his function can fail to heed them. Why is it that men like Hillis and Dawson are taking up Burton's lament as to the aimlessness of their past ministry, and are going to halls and parks and other strange places to preach the evangel? These men are liberal enough and literary enough not to be classed with literalists and fanatics. They will tell you that they have seen a vision and heard a call, and they must be true to them or cease to preach. The critics have had their day and done their work. Some of them have labored to good purpose, and our children will build tombs for some whom we have stoned. The foundations of our faith, unmoved by scientific and philosophical pickax, seem stronger now than ever. But just now we are not talking much about critics—high or low—nor are we constrained above measure by either scientific or theological narrowness. Bishop Hall said, centuries ago, "The most useful of all our theological books would be one with the title *De Paucitate Credendorum*," of the fewness of the things necessary to be

CATCHING MEN

believed. This, in substance, the people are saying to us to-day. They do not give first place to sermons on the puzzling books of the Bible. They are satisfied that they have been the victims of some religious pettifogging. They have found out at last that the interest of the Book of Jonah does not lie in the anatomy of the whale or the time it would take a fish to make chyme and chyle of a prophet. It finds the lesson of the book is as fresh as its own last pang of conscience. It is in a single sentence: The man who runs away from God and duty will eternally get into trouble, and he who repents, though he has no more light than a heathen, will find the mercy of God. This new evangelism was not born in the pulpit nor in the homes of the ministry, but of the common people, and in that it followed in the footsteps of every great reformation from the days of Savonarola to those of Evan Roberts. One of the marvels of it is, that men whom we have called liberals, or something worse, have been among the first to heed the message. They have stopped reading literary essays, and have gone to preaching with tears in their voices. They have left their pulpits, and preached from the tail of a cart. They have renounced the scholarly ease of one essay a week, and have counted it a joy to preach bareheaded in the market every day, and have said, in holy abandon, "What's the use

CATCHING MEN

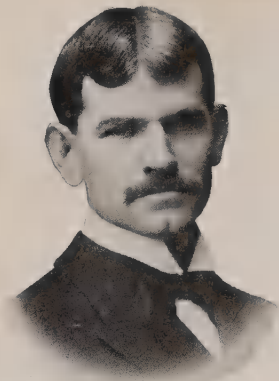
of dying of bacilli when one might die of hard work?"

Nowhere is the changed attitude of the ministry more apparent than in Greater New York. It was in some respects the greatest day the city ever saw, religiously, when in the early summer scores of preachers, many of them from the first pulpits, so-called, in the city, gathered at noon, by permission of the city authorities, on the steps of the City Hall to inaugurate a great movement to reach the people during the summer in the streets and parks. All opposition seemed to melt away. Enemies and critics of the movement became friends, and the city opened all her streets and squares to the proclamation of the evangel. Thousands of men gathered every Monday thereafter on the steps of the Custom House, in front of the Stock Exchange, and elsewhere, and incalculable good was done. Men who had not heard the gospel since they were children were moved to come back to the faith of their youth, and the whole city was moved by the spectacle of the men who are preaching to the wealth and culture of the city and to crowded churches coming to stand on the street corner like any humble servant to entreat men to come to God. All summer this work has gone on, in tent and public square, to the blessing of the entire city and the salvation of many. The people are asking us to preach the

CATCHING MEN

evangel with the simplicity, self-denial, and heartfelt fervor which I have indicated. They ask bread, and will not be satisfied with a stone. What led most of us to preach was a passion for the souls of men. Has the passion cooled? One of our bishops recalled before our preachers' meeting the thrilling experience of his call to preach. He showed himself to us kneeling in the melting snow in an agony of prayer, and asked himself tearfully if he was willing to do the thing now. Come back to the old love by way of the closet; come back to the old joy by way of the same old cross; preach the old evangel, which is ever new, and preach it with a loving heart, and the world, which has been cold to you, will crowd once more to listen.

Whatever the professors may say, the sermon which God and angels call great is the sermon which greatly does the thing for which every sermon should be preached.



CHAPTER XI.

THE EVERY-DAY EVANGELIST.¹

BY PRESIDENT EDWIN H.
HUGHES, D. D.

THE author of this chapter has illustrated in a most fruitful ministry the practical and vital principles of every-day evangelism. It was the habit of Dr. J. O. Peck, one of the greatest pastor evangelists in America, to call at the offices of business men, when first appointed to a parish, and say in a straightforward way: "I am glad to meet you, sir. I came to call on business. You know what my business is, namely, to persuade men to come into fellowship with God. I should like a few moments of your time as soon as convenient." "O, certainly!" would be the almost invariable reply. This utter frankness and straightforwardness captured the men of affairs, and usually secured an immediate hearing. Rev. Dr. Hughes, president of DePauw University, has earned the right to speak for himself upon this very vital phase of evangelism. May we hear and heed and practice the message which he brings upon every-day evangelism!

¹ An address delivered at Winona Assembly and reported stenographically.

CATCHING MEN

AFTER considerable opportunity to observe the Church of Christ in America, I am quite fully persuaded that the Church has ceased to be apostolic so far as the use of one special method of work is concerned.

If any one shall construe what I say here into a stated or implied, a near or remote, direct or hinted, or any other kind of possible opposition to revivals, he will wrong me, he will wrong himself, and he will wrong the Church of Christ. When a man takes the ground that it is a good thing occasionally to use the left hand as well as to use the right hand, no one has any cause whatever to say the man is making an attack on the right hand. Indeed, I do not regard as at all accurate any statement of the case that seems to imply an opposition between a general movement in a community for the work of Divine grace and a special movement toward some individual heart for the bringing of that heart to Jesus Christ. There is no contradiction between running and walking. Both are methods of real progress. And yet it may be questioned whether it would not be a bad thing for a man to get it into his head that running was the only method by which he could possibly reach his destination. That there may be no possible danger that I shall be misunderstood, let me say at the outset that I believe firmly in revivals of the historic type, and that I have

CATCHING MEN

never allowed a year of my ministry to pass without endeavoring to have a general work of grace in the community. I may add in all modesty that those special efforts have always met with a fair degree of success. And yet after something of a study of the conditions of our own time, I have been fully persuaded that the great mistake of the Church of the latter part of the nineteenth century and the opening of the twentieth century lies in the attempt to do its work in a public and wholesale manner almost entirely, and that if we are to succeed at all in the mighty campaign which we are waging, it will be necessary for us to come back to both forms of *Biblical evangelism*.

I. A word in reference to *personal experience* may prove somewhat revealing. I do not remember now a single conversion that took place in the ordinary season of work throughout my boyhood. Dying sinners were sometimes led to the Lord, but living sinners, for practically eleven months in the year, were allowed to pursue their way undisturbed, save for an occasional revival sermon, which nobody expected to yield any immediate fruit. And in the first year of my ministry, after having held several weeks of special revival services, I simply gave over the expectancy of having any more conversions or accessions to the Church through that Conference year. When, in the early summer following, something of a revival broke

CATCHING MEN

out in our midst and seven persons joined the Church, several officials came to me after the service and said, "Never before in our lives did we see anything of this sort at this season of the year."

I was pastor for a summer in one of the towns of Iowa. There were two Churches in that town, a Methodist Episcopal and a Presbyterian. I was pastor of the Methodist Episcopal. I discovered that the two Churches were about equal numerically, and, although the admission may seem to be somewhat strange, I was not able to detect that the Methodist people were any more pious than the Presbyterian people! The whole situation made me thoughtful. I took a record of the Methodist Church, and discovered that, save in the most rare instances, all the members had been added to that Church as the result of special revival effort. I inquired into the history of the Presbyterian Church, and, so far as I could discover, it had never had a revival. That was very much of a mistake, of course. The whole situation made me thoughtful. I said, "Here are two Churches, one a revival and one not, and they are about equal numerically, and equal spiritually." I discovered the secret of the Presbyterian success in that community to lie in the constant evangelism of the pastor. Every time he saw anybody in his congregation who seemed to be touched with the spirit

CATCHING MEN

of interest, that person was immediately followed up, and one by one, throughout the year, men and women were brought to a public confession of Jesus Christ.

“Now,” I said to myself, “if two men working in this community, the one using the revival method and the other the individual method, can build Churches that are fairly strong, why in the name of common sense is it not a possible thing for one man working in this community to use both these methods with a degree of success? This double way of viewing evangelistic work is strictly in accord with *the Scriptures*.”

II. I passed, in due season, to the theological seminary. There I heard an address by Lyman Abbott on “The Preaching of Jesus.” I do not remember a great deal of that discourse, but I got one point out of it,—Jesus was to be my exemplar as a preacher and Christian worker. Scores of times since that day I have gone to my New Testament to find out how Jesus preached and worked. When I endeavored to discover how Jesus worked in bringing men to Himself, I made what seemed to me a very astonishing discovery: Jesus, in all His public ministry, never had what we would call a distinct revival. He was going to men here and there, preaching to congregations often made up simply of one individual. I think it fair to say the individual method of work with

CATCHING MEN

Jesus was *predominant*, if not exclusive. There were times when He deliberately left the crowd, as at Jericho, and went away to talk with one lone, lost soul.

Now, when you come into the Acts, you find the two methods. The story of Pentecost (and we ought never to remove Pentecost from our Bible or from our method of work) is followed by the statement: "There were added to the Church daily such as were in process of being saved." Then look at Antioch with its great revival; and on the other hand is the scene wherein Philip joins the eunuch in the chariot, and talks over the things of the kingdom and leads him to the Lord. Here we find the two methods walking hand in hand.

When you come into the Epistles, precisely the same thing is true. So far as we know, the Church at Ephesus did not begin in a revival. Paul worked three years there. The Church of Galatia was not born in a revival. Paul was passing through that territory and was taken sick, and from his bed he preached the gospel, and evidently the Church was organized. So far as we are able to observe from a study of the Epistles, the great number named in the Pauline letters were not converted in revivals. Here we find the two methods very plainly revealed in the Bible, and out of the observation of another pastor's work,

CATCHING MEN

and of later study of the New Testament, I came to the conviction that the great thing for the Church of Jesus Christ to do to-day is to have its Pentecost, its continual effort for a general revival of Divine grace, and to have likewise the effort for a revival of Divine grace in some individual heart.

III. Any careful study of *the situation in our day* will convince us that the revival method needs to be supplemented by the individual method. I am very sure the evangelists and pastors present will confirm the statement that we have come to a period of very general and severe reaction against revivals. And with this reaction upon us, many pastors are facing their work with a great concern. They endeavor to hold revival services, and they find very strong obstacles in the way. Moody discovered it, and when he came to Boston the last two times he gave up the idea of having a general revival in that community, and began simply to try to increase the members of the Church in spiritual faith and power. G. Campbell Morgan seems to have discovered the same thing. Every time I have heard Campbell Morgan speak he has not preached a distinctly revival sermon, but rather a sermon to the people who had already allied themselves to Jesus Christ. So even the evangelists to-day recognize the situation precisely as it is.

CATCHING MEN

We are living in a complex age. I have not been a pastor very many years, sixteen or seventeen, but I see a vast change in my own work. My first charge was in Iowa, nine miles from a railroad station, post-office, or town of any kind. The situation was not complex. Life was simple. The unconverted in that community either had to go to a revival meeting in the evening or stay at home. They could take their choice. But in the last eight years I have been working against hard odds. I was where I was competing with scores of theaters and clubs and charitable organizations. In the first instance, my problem was this: How to take a congregation that was one-fourth Christian and three-fourths non-Christian, and use the one-fourth Christian so as to get the three-fourths to Christ.

Of course, it is very different when the evangelist comes. He arouses something of curiosity. The people who are not in the habit of going to Church go to hear the stranger, and the evangelist may not always see this problem from the standpoint of the pastor. But the problem is upon us, and I do not know of any pastor to-day that does not feel the stress of it again and again. We need a method of work that shall tide us over this reaction, and shall bring back to us, not a new method, but an old method.

There are very many persons to-day whom we

CATCHING MEN

call gospel-hardened. They are not. They are simply method-hardened. We sometimes wonder at the very slight effect our public discourses produce on the unconverted in our congregations. But, my friends, if you will go to a man and look him straight in the face and say, "I have come to talk frankly with you of your duty to Jesus Christ," you will be tremendously astonished to see what an immediate effect your words have on that individual soul. While that man has become more or less hardened to certain methods of religious approach, there is another method to which he has not become hardened. There is, of course, a danger in our revival methods that all revivalists recognize, and in my opinion there is a danger in the method of constant evangelism also. The greatest danger is that a man shall mistake a certain thrill of emotion for change of heart under the revival method. In the every-day evangelism the danger is that the man shall come too easily and too jauntily into the Christian life. We sometimes say that hand-picked fruit is the best, but it is just as possible to have hand-picked fruit in a revival as out of a revival. Yet I think I may say, as a result of twelve years' experience, much of it spent in the line of individual evangelism, that the very best results I have seen in my ministry have been by dealing with men face to face, and talking to them in the home, in the office, and

CATCHING MEN

in the store concerning their duty to the Lord Christ.

There is another problem that has something of a solution, I am persuaded, in this method of work. I know it is a delicate problem; that is, the problem of reaching in due proportion the different sexes. I examined very carefully the records of certain Churches, and I found very few cases indeed where the women did not outnumber the men by at least two to one.

I want to give you some figures taken from my own work. In my revival work in two winters I received forty-eight into the Church. Eleven of the forty-eight were men and thirty-seven of the forty-eight were women. In my individual work for those two years I received seventy-five people. Forty of the seventy-five were men, and thirty-five of the seventy-five were women. I do not intend to go into explanation of those figures. I do not pretend to say they are normal. I only say they are the result of my experience, and I give them to you precisely for what they are worth.

IV. It may be well to say a few words in regard to *method*. The matter of a first approach to men in individual evangelism is of much importance. It has always seemed to me that *letter-writing* ought to be given a large place. We have never yet dedicated as we ought the postal system

CATCHING MEN

of this country to the work of Christ. It is an immense agency in social life and in commercial life. But how very many gospel letters ought to be sent out, and are not, the most of us know. It has been my privilege to write not simply scores, but hundreds of evangelistic letters, distinctly inviting men to Jesus Christ. I am persuaded that there is here a vast unemployed agency for advancing the work of our Lord's kingdom. I doubt not for a single moment that if the Christian workers here to-day would more and more dedicate their pens to postal evangelism there would be some mighty work done for Christ in the years to come.

But nothing can take the place of the consecrated voice. Men sometimes say we need to banish all religious vocabulary and phrases like "sin," and "salvation," and "saved by grace," and "come to Jesus." I do not sympathize with that talk. Phrases like "sin," and "salvation," and "saved by grace," and "come to Jesus," ought to abide, and will abide as long as the faith of God abides. Yet there are times when it is distinctly better to drop the ordinary terms of religious vocabulary. You enter a man's office and say, "I have come to invite you to Jesus," and it may be you are using a phrase beyond that man's unconverted and unconvicted state of mind. But if you come into the room in a natural manner and say,

CATCHING MEN

"You are in the habit of hearing me preach on Sunday, and I have come to have a frank talk with you concerning your duty in reference to your religious life," you will approach him in a way that perhaps suits his state of mind better. I have an excellent precedent for it. I remember that Jesus, when He approached a man, a somewhat difficult case, said, "To-day I must abide at thy house," and invited Himself home to dinner with Zaccheus. I do not know that that would precisely suit the ideas of some people. It was the way Jesus worked. Over the dinner-table later He talked of Divine grace, and the publican yielded himself to God and showed fruit meet for repentance.

On the other hand, when Nicodemus came to Jesus, He talked of the essential thing. The difference between the cases was here: Jesus went after Zaccheus, whereas Nicodemus came to Jesus. Jesus used the message in either case that was appropriate to the individual. There is nothing in every-day evangelism that will work more against our success than anything which is not perfectly genuine and natural. We ought never to talk of our religious life as if, instead of being food, it was medicine. We want to do away with the pious tone. If you go to the business man, and at the outset assume anything that is not perfectly genuine in manner, you are very

CATCHING MEN

likely to destroy at once any possibility of doing him good.

Two years ago a young man came to me and said he would like to have a talk with me sometime about the way in which I was working. I invited him to take dinner. "Now," he said, "I want you to give me the secret of your Church work." "There is no secret to it," I replied. "Yes, there must be some secret to it," he replied. "You are receiving people into the Church every single month, one, two, three, four, seven, and fifteen. Now, there is some secret to it." "No," I said to him, "there is no secret to it. Let me ask you a question. It is now more than six months since your Conference year began. How many times in these six months have you gone to some home and said, 'I have come to have a frank talk with you about your duty to Jesus Christ?'" He said, "I never do that; I have not done that once." There is where the secret lies. Public preaching is an art, and when a man begins public preaching it is not an easy thing. Private preaching is an art, and when one begins it is not easy. I want to say to you that, although I have had some good times in public speaking, I have had times of ecstatic joy in looking into the face of an individual man and talking to him about his duty in reference to Jesus Christ.

CATCHING MEN

V. Let me give you some *concrete instances*. I had in my last congregation a man of seventy-eight. He was freight trainmaster on one of the largest railway systems in the East. He had been an attendant on the Church of which I was pastor for sixty-five years, ever since he was thirteen years of age. I wrote him letters. One evening I rang his door-bell and said, "I have come to spend part of the evening with you and talk over the religious life." He did not feel very comfortable, and neither did I. But we went into the parlor and sat down. I talked with that man for an hour and a half. Before that time had passed, he yielded himself to Christ. I said not a word to him with reference to public confession. Our prayer-meeting was on Friday night. To my surprise and gratification that gentleman came to prayer-meeting, and when the time for testimony came he was the first man to make a public confession. Next communion these hands put the water of holy baptism on his white head. He had said to me rather pathetically, "I have been attending this Church for sixty-five years, and never before has any pastor come to me to talk face to face in reference to my duty to Jesus Christ."

I said to a young man standing in the vestibule of the church, "Why not, here and now, give your heart to Jesus Christ?" He said, as we stood there with the roar of conversation about

CATCHING MEN

us, "Mr. Hughes, I will do the very best I can, and be just as true as I can." To-day he is one of the best workers in a New England Church.

I remember going into the office of a young man, a regular attendant at my church, and sitting down with him in the private office. I said, "I have felt for quite a number of months as though I ought to have a talk with you about your religious duty." I talked away for five minutes, and finally gave him a chance to speak. He said, "I have wanted to do this thing for months, and I have been hoping that you would come and have a talk with me." Right in the office that young man started on a successful Christian career. Now, I believe, my friends, that there are literally thousands and hundreds of thousands of people in America to-day that can be reached in that way, and led in an easy and natural manner into the kingdom to become splendid followers of our Great Redeemer.

VI. But some one will say, "*Were they converted?*" There is no more convincing evidence of the fact that we have moved away from that line of personal evangelism so prominent in the life of Jesus and in the lives of the disciples than that, whenever we lead anybody into the kingdom in that way, somebody is sure to say, "But was the person converted?" Listen to me. I see a man back yonder, hundreds of years ago, standing

CATCHING MEN

on the shore of the lake. I see on the lake some young men fishing. He says to them, "Follow Me." They pulled the boat over the blue waves; they left their nets; they went after Him. That was the beginning of the Christian career of John the Evangelist. I know it sounds very easy, very natural. I suspect if some of us had been there we would have said, "I wonder if the man is really converted?" The man who in that easy way pulled the boat over the water finally caught sight of the Golden City with jasper walls and the streets of glorious light.

Here is another case. A man is riding along in the desert, and another man climbs into the carriage and discovers that the man is reading the Old Testament. He talks to the man in reference to the way God was leading His people, and explains in a very natural way concerning Jesus. Finally the eunuch looks up and says, "I believe that; what hinders me to be baptized?" And Philip answers, "Nothing." I know it was very easy and natural. There at the roadside the Church had its open door, and without examination by deacons or elders the man went down and was baptized into the faith of Jesus Christ. I do not know why scenes of that kind might not well be repeated in our own day.

VII. The truth is *the average layman* of our times does not have a pulpit, and most of the

CATCHING MEN

work of the evangelist has been done in a public fashion. The Twelve went out, and so did the Seventy. When the Seventy came back they reported to Jesus that even the devils were subject to them. I declare to you my conviction that every Christian, in the necessity of the case, should be an evangelist, and there ought not to be a single man anywhere in all this great country professing the Divine grace who does not carry the message of Divine grace to the hearts of his fellow-men. If we could turn the lay people of the Church to constant evangelism, we would break the fallow ground of the kingdom, and bring a wonderful harvest into the granary of the Lord our God.

I remember working on a layman, a business man, who had been a trustee of the Church, and when I could go no farther I went to a fellow-trustee, and said, "I want you to have a talk with him." This man, who had been a member of the General Conference, said, "I never did such a thing as that." I said: "It is time you began to do it. Go to him in a natural way, and if your religious life has been a help to you, tell the man so, and try to get him to accept the Lord." He said, "I do n't know how I will get on." He took him off to dinner, and had the joy of leading him to Christ. And what a spirit of confidence and courage came to the heart of the layman who,

CATCHING MEN

in twenty-five years of Christian life, had never tried directly to lead anybody to Jesus Christ! That thing ought to be done all over the Church. If we had in every local Church a nucleus of five or twenty-five persons who were definitely consecrated to the work of every-day evangelism, the kingdom of God would move on this world very speedily indeed.

VIII. Every-day evangelism is a *call to genuine heroism*. It is a very hard thing to hold revival meetings. Sometimes I wonder how evangelists stand it month in and month out, year in and year out, with the immense drain on the physical life and on the sympathies. But do not let any one suppose that this other type of work is an easy thing. There will be times when you would give much if you did not have to ring a door-bell and tell men of their duty to Jesus Christ. There will be times when you would surrender almost everything you have rather than go into the office of the business man and look him in the face and tell him about his duty to the Master. Let no man suppose it is a work of ease. There is no harder work. And if a man is out in the kingdom of God looking for a task that will lay upon his life an immense pressure, let him begin to be an every-day evangelist, not simply a public speaker of Divine grace, but a private talker with men regarding the things of God, and he will find the

CATCHING MEN

largest task, and, in many cases, the severest task he has ever undertaken.

IX. What would we attain by this method in the way of *results*? Suppose the ministers should this next year bring one soul a month by way of personal evangelism to Jesus Christ, what would be the effect in the different branches of Methodism? Next year, at the rate of one a month, we would add 460,000 to the Church of Jesus Christ. Among the Baptists at this rate we would add 426,000 people to the Church of Jesus Christ. And if you were to take all the evangelical denominations in this country, and presume that their ministers would bring only one person a month by this every-day evangelism, we would add to the Church in America by this one method, 1,600,000. Then we would quit wondering why it was the kingdom of Jesus Christ did not hasten in our day to its glorious consummation.

And if to the 1,600,000 gathered in by every-day evangelism of the ministers and of the laymen of the various Churches we should add those brought in by methods of public revivals and in our Sunday-schools, the Church would gather in 3,000,000. And before my hair has turned much grayer, the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ would have come, and between these two great oceans we would feel the tides rise higher and

CATCHING MEN

higher. The Church would become as bright as the sun, and as fair as the moon, and as terrible as an army with banners. I pray for Pentecost; I pray that the meaning of that great day may never be lost. But I pray also for the coming of the Philip who shall talk to the lonely soul as he goes into the desert until that soul shall look up into the face of the every-day evangelist and say, "What doth hinder me?"



CHAPTER XII.
THE PERSONAL RELIGIOUS TOUCH — A CONTRIBUTION TO AGGRESSIVE EVANGELISM.

BY PROFESSOR SOLON C.
BRONSON, D. D.

THERE is one claim which may be made for this entire volume, as well as for this chapter; namely, it is not theoretical but practical. Professor Bronson holds a chair in Garrett Biblical Institute. It is called the Chair of Practical Theology, and he is a practical teacher. He has earned the right to speak upon personal touch, because of personal devotion to individual souls. He applies himself not only to the personal spiritual welfare of his pupils, but he companions with waifs gathered from the streets of a great city. He spends much time with neglected children of Italians and other foreigners in down-town Chicago. The chapter printed here was first addressed to the Chicago Preachers' Meeting. The impression made upon them was so favorable that they requested that it be reduced to permanent form. The reader will be glad that the mention to print has been realized.

THE aim of this paper is aptly expressed by the sub-title,—it is a contribution only. It at-

CATCHING MEN

tempts no discrimination between the various forms of evangelism, its purpose being simply to present one form or manner of work.

I do not know that I shall be able to contribute very much to the discussion, but I desire to express some simple rules for the personal worker which in various ways have suggested themselves to me, and withal have been of marked benefit to others.

First of all, a word or two as to the manner of approach to the subject. Books have recently appeared in great numbers dealing with the question of personal religious work. These may all be classified under two kinds: 1st. Those which approach the question from the Biblical point of view, setting forth Biblical incident and exhortation as example and encouragement to be followed; and 2d. Those approaching the question from the standpoint of personal experience,—the narrative of a personal worker as illustrative of how one man has done this work. The approach here is to be neither the one nor the other of these. Rather it may be said to be an approach from the standpoint of modern psychology, and the aim will be, therefore, not to suggest any example to be followed, but to develop in each one a way of his own, to be guided by certain general principles. Attention is to be directed to the man behind the plan.

CATCHING MEN

And yet, even here, we shall not delay with those necessary questions of the religious life and experience. We shall always assume them. Assume them to be settled—forever settled. We are not now proceeding in the belief that what we need chiefly is more religion. That is doubtless true, as it is always true; but it is even a question whether or not more religion would solve the awful problem we have to solve in the work of to-day. We need to study the conditions anew and seek a new adjustment of our surroundings. We believe in more religion, and of that one might now profitably speak, but we believe also in training the religious man for the task he is to perform. It is this last which concerns us just now.

I think it may be safely said that we are as religious as our fathers were, only the religious life expresses itself differently. They were rather narrowly restricted to saving men. We, by reason of our conditions, must extend our activities to many subjects which never claimed any of their attention. They were more intense on the one thing; we are just as strenuous, but our intensity must needs be expended on a variety of things.

Relatively, the great question of getting men saved does not hold the place in modern religious thought it did with the fathers. Then, too, each age will be influenced by certain dominating tendencies, and these will do much toward shaping

CATCHING MEN

the conduct of any one who takes a part in the life of the age. Just at present, I think, there can be no question but our ideals have changed from *individualism* to *socialism* in religion, that in the highest sense no man is saved until the social life is saved. Or, to put it in another way, that no man is adequately saved so long as another whom he ought to reach is lost. Social salvation is a modern, but, withal, very dominant idea with us.

Not only does the ideal of the age change, but by the very complexity of modern life we are led to give ourselves to the doing of things; to concerning ourselves with somewhat larger matters; to working great organizations. We deal with men *en masse*, so that we have less time and less inclination to fix attention on the individual. We love men in general; but we sometimes pass over the concrete man who brushes against us on the street.

Now, for this work, for which I appeal to-day, we need to restore some part of those earlier ideals, and a large part of that early conviction and aim. I have, then, no hesitancy in saying that the first great requisite is a deep conviction that this work must be done, this work of personally reaching men, and that it will be done, and that anything which is either needful or helpful to us in doing it well will also be done.

CATCHING MEN

Coupled with that is a conscious love for men, for individual men,—a love which will enable us to pick them out and make them for the time being the objects of prayerful personal effort.

If we have such a conviction as that, and such a love as that, then I think we are ready to advance. For if our religious life finds expression in such a conviction and love as that, then we shall be willing to learn in any school whatever may help us in our work. To such my words are addressed to-day. For others, if any such be present, I have shaped no word. The business is too serious for loss of time. It is not my purpose to create an enthusiasm or a conviction on this matter. It is my purpose only to try to help the man who wants help in doing what I conceive to be one of the most mastering obligations of the ministry to-day, though alas! one of the most commonly neglected of our duties,—the leading of men to Jesus Christ by personal contact.

Perhaps the need of considering this phase of the question has an urgency to-day such as it has never had before. Evangelism is in the air, the desire of every sincere heart, yet the despair of many. Changes have certainly come to us, changes which require special consideration, and changes to which as yet we are only meagerly adjusted. It seems clear to me that, if we measure the

CATCHING MEN

success of present-day evangelism by our public meetings, we are dropping behind. We preached yesterday, you and I, to our scores or hundreds. Just what was the effect? The old test question which our fathers put to themselves—"Was anybody converted?"—would doubtless silence most of us this morning. Here and there may be a type of the old man to remain; but, for the most part, we do not keep up with the pace our fathers set.

The minister under present conditions is a shepherd, familiar and near. There is none of the exciting novelty about him. He has no new ways, or startling surprises. The ways he brings with him at first soon lose their novelty, and people are no longer either attracted or frightened by them. Whatever we may make of it, it is certainly true that a lengthened pastoral term is not conducive to spasmodic evangelism. I question whether this lengthened pastoral term, and then its removal altogether, has helped the ordinary man in this particular line of work, and the most of us must be content to be extraordinarily ordinary. Even Mr. Sunday would be unable to live and work, week in and week out, year in and year out, with the same people in the harness we wear. All this is said, not in depreciation of spasmodic evangelism, but only to emphasize the fact that the changed pastoral conditions necessitate em-

CATCHING MEN

phasis upon other lines of work also. The modern pastor is more like a father than a visiting angel or peripatetic prophet. And, after all, it would not seem to be the best line of approach for a father to gather his family together in a meeting to evangelize it. The father's work would better be done through the quiet influence of a personal touch. Or, to seize upon that great word which the Master Himself gave to characterize His work, one could scarce expect the shepherd of the flock to speak to it *en masse*; one would rather be inclined to think of the shepherd calling them name by name. This is the one form of evangelism with which we are now concerned; at least it is one form to be cultivated under the conditions of modern pastoral service.

If these conditions are here correctly set forth, then it is fair to conclude that the most constantly open field for the average pastor, the one lying nearest, and the one which the average man can most successfully work, is that of evangelism by personal contact, individual work for individuals.

We can not all be great preachers, whose voice from the pulpit will compel men to Church attendance, but it is open to any of us to be a great friend.

We may not all of us be great in holding revival meetings, in creating and administering the necessary agencies, and in swaying men by the

CATCHING MEN

power of public appeal. But any average man, with grace and love for men, can do much in the quieter work of winning men one by one by personal contact.

And now we are ready for the question, How can this best be done? Can we learn anything which will enable us to do that work better than we have done it?

I said a moment ago that here we are concerned with the man behind the plan. As such, it is, first of all, a question of personality. You must be strong with men. The question has sometimes been raised as to whether this element of personality is subject to the educational processes. Can one who has a weak personality develop a strong personality? Men have differed in answering that, but I think we need not hesitate to answer it strongly in the affirmative. It can be developed just as other qualities can be. It is not whether a man of weak personality can become Napoleonic, but whether he can make himself stronger than his weakness. Any way, that is one of the things to be held in mind. We must become strong with men, factors—not ciphers—in the communities to which we are sent. And just here it is that this personal strength may most easily be expressed in personal contact. Many a man whose personality never can be impressive to a crowd, may yet be impressive to the one.

CATCHING MEN

Dr. Trumbull, himself in many ways a high example to personal workers, put it in one of his model editorial notes thus: "An ounce of powder exploded in the open expends itself in a puff of smoke; confined in a little magazine, it will send a bullet to the heart of a tree." So many a man whose personality expends itself in helplessness before a great crowd, can impress a single hearer. It ought frankly to be confessed by many of us that we fail with the great congregation simply because we are not equal to it, we haven't personality to go so far. This other—the making of an impression on a single hearer—lies nearer within the range of our possibility.

How to make one's self strong with men, then, is a question which each needs to press in upon his own heart. That, then, is the first thing: Be strong with men. It might be profitable to spend the hour in answering the question how that personal force is to be developed.

The second, as approaching the final answer of all, is this: it is needful to remove from our lives all personal piques and peculiarities which offend and alienate men. Some of us are coarse and bluff, some of us are untidy and unkempt, some of us have offensive ways; and these must be corrected at once. I think this involves the question of the ethical life—the whole life and standing of a man in the community. Of the true bishop, the leader

CATCHING MEN

of the local Church, the apostle insists that "he must have a good report from them that are without." We need not conceal it from ourselves that the man who would hope to reach men personally must have an absolutely unblemished record. Call it by whatever name you will, it means high, noble, clean, straight living; such a pattern of good works "that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of us." This involves also the assertion of a true Christian manhood—manliness, as opposed to anything effeminate, or puerile, or mean, a dash of real manliness—straightforward Rooseveltian manliness is one of the things some of us need most of all. We are weak, insipid, uncertain. Men are little impressed with the strength and rotundity of our moral character. We need to be men in order to carry very far these days, either in the pulpit as preachers, or in our social relations as pastors. "Quit yourselves like men, be strong."

The third suggestion I care to make as bearing on the matter of personal work is this: Work along the lines of social contact. You can not arrest a sinner, as a policeman arrests a criminal on the street. You must make social contact with him; Jesus did, and we must. In that memorable case of the woman at the well, it was so. We may believe that what we have in that account is but a brief statement of the case. Not all that occurred,

CATCHING MEN

not all that was said on that occasion, got reported. But enough was reported to show us that Jesus made social contact with that friendless woman before He compelled her attention to the profound theme of His discourse. It is well for us to remember that, for it cuts deeply across some of our practices in the matter. It means so much to us under the present social conditions. God gives us these social contacts that we may use them to win others to Him. Indeed it may be put more strongly still: we are under religious obligation to make friends, to extend acquaintance, in order that we may win men to Christ. The pastor of any community ought to be one of the best known, most familiar men of the town; not from the pulpit, but on the streets and to men in daily walks. That is part of his business, to make social contact with men, that he may win them to Jesus Christ.

But that means, also, that he shall be as true to the closest personal friendship as to the more remote. That's a great thing, to employ our nearest social contacts in the interests of men. That cuts still deeper into the quick of our lives.

Prof. Bosworth, in his text on the Acts, states the theme of that book as follows: "Men empowered by the Holy Spirit, beginning at Jerusalem a world conquest by a campaign of testimony." I have been accustomed to change one word in

CATCHING MEN

that, *beginning at home*. It is much easier to begin away from home; much easier to approach strangers than friends; to speak to the neighbors in the next block than to the children of one's own household.

Yet he who can not begin at home is poorly equipped to go abroad. He who can not speak to his own children would better be cautious how he speaks to the people who dwell next door. Begin with those with whom you already have social contact.

This may revive the question as to whether we are not losing, or have not already lost, the art of serious religious conversation. What *do* we talk about when we get together, friend with friend? What *do* we talk about when we meet men? Do we ever talk to men personally about the question of personal salvation? Not always, I mean, so as to become bores to men, but ever at any time? Much of our most effective work could be done in this way, if we would cultivate wisely the art of religious conversation.

In one of the Illinois Conferences, a few years ago, I was introduced by one of my students to a minister who, judging by his dress, certainly had not occupied the metropolitan pulpits. This student was especially anxious for some reason to give me that introduction, because he said, "That man got me into the ministry," and further, "there

CATCHING MEN

are twelve or thirteen other men in this Conference that that man has led into the ministry." I met the man with interest, and in conversation, as we drifted apart from others, I asked him how he had done this. "Well," he reflectively answered, "whenever I saw a young fellow that I thought would make a good preacher, I cultivated his acquaintance; and then some day I would get him arm-in-arm to walk out into the woods; and then, when we were alone, I would put the matter on his heart; and would you believe it," he eagerly said, "almost always the Holy Spirit would speak to him and he would answer the call?"

"*Would you believe it?*" I have asked that question of myself many times since then. Yes, I do believe that the Holy Spirit will almost always speak to a man who is artfully approached thus by a friend. And He would speak to a great many more men, if we were to take them arm-in-arm for a walk into the woods, to put the matter of greatest interest upon their hearts.

The fourth suggestion I desire to make follows closely. The third was: Work along the lines of social contact. The fourth is a part of it: Study your man. Having found him in the circles of social contact, study your man. It need not be a long study, but it ought to be an important one. Come to know his habitat; take into account his habits, his hours of work, associations, amuse-

CATCHING MEN

ments, reading. The point of contact with that man will be determined by these things. You must tie on to something in his life. It may not always be the point you would naturally choose, but it is the point which his conditions lay open to you. Men use this sort of wisdom in business. I know a coal-dealer who, opening his business in a new town, placed his trade with one of the largest merchants, and, instead of paying cash, ran monthly accounts, "in order," as he said, "to get my name and business before that man. He will perhaps come and run bills for coal, and then will exchange accounts. Besides, this biggest merchant is president of the school board. Perhaps my bid will get some recognition for that also."

Of course, if any of us run accounts simply to make the point of contact religiously with some man, we will carefully do, as that coal-dealer did, pay up at the end of the month and in the way the merchant demands.

Or it may be a question of time—of the man's time, not yours. Do n't tackle him when he is running to catch a train. It might be wise, however, to run with him to catch that train, just to ride with him to the city and so catch him in an off moment.

One of my students, some years ago, fixed his mind upon the husband of a woman who was a member of his Church. The man worked Sundays,

CATCHING MEN

going to his work at six in the morning. How to catch him, was the question. The student did not reach his charge until Saturday night, and the man was in bed. This is what he did. He got up Sunday morning, and just accidentally met the man when he came out of his home to go to work, and he walked a whole mile with him to the shops. In three times he got his man. *Study your man.*

I once got into the habit of dropping into a barber-shop, and when I entered, invariably a lot of young loafers would nonchalantly file out. I knew by the very air of the surroundings what had been going on. I knew it was a vile place and these were vile men. It grieved me, and I was nonplused to know what to do to change that place. I studied up on the barber business, learned of its history, its dignified associations at a former time, and one day, while the artist was at work on my face, I asked him about it, told him what I knew, and he did n't know, and set before him the need of intelligence, as well as skill, on the part of the barber; how great a man a barber ought to be; how influential for good; what a chance a barber had, if he knew enough, of shaping public opinion, and how sad was the spectacle of a profession of such distinguished ancestry to have fallen so low. Then I told him how he was evidently divinely appointed to assist and change the young fellows who made his shop a

CATCHING MEN

stopping-place. Well, I got my barber to my way of thinking, and his influence on the young fellows harboring there was marked for good. Study your man. Tie on to something in his life—not yours.

The fifth thing I want to say has a profound psychological reason behind it. It is this: Having found your man, and discovered the point of contact, improve the first opportunity providence offers to reach the man.

Prof. James, in his *Psychology*, says that to insure success to any new régime you must launch it with a strong cast of the will the very first chance you have, and never suffer a relapse to occur until your new order of life has become a habit. There is great wisdom in that as applied to the personal attack on men. Having located your man and found the point of contact, improve the first chance to do the work.

For some years I was in the habit of conducting a class in personal work in the Young Men's Christian Association. It was my custom, dealing with that third suggestion—find your man in the circle of social contact—to have the students write down the name of such a man. When all had complied, I quickly followed it with this: Improve the first chance providence gives you of reaching that man. The next week the work was called for. This came from a young clerk. He said: "When you told us to write the name

CATCHING MEN

of some man with whom we had social contact, not knowing just what was involved in it, I put down the name of my chum, the man I had slept with for six months. I was therefore startled when you next told us to improve the first opportunity for reaching our man. I went home and crawled into bed that night, but I could not sleep. That word, 'Improve the first chance,' troubled me. After a long time, and just to venture a little bit, I nudged my chum to see if he were awake, and to my amazement I found him fully so. There was no chance to dodge now, for he at once asked me what I wanted, and I told him. And, to make the matter short, within half an hour we were both out of bed and on our knees, and that night my chum gave himself to Jesus Christ." Now, I ask, who shall say but another six months would have passed as had the first six months but for the observance of that principle Prof. James insists upon, "Improve the first opportunity to put into operation the new order of life?"

Some of us greatly need courage to do what we know we ought. The new order can best be established with us if we launch it at once. Better to begin to-day, now, and suffer no relapse in the undertaking, until the new order has become established as a daily and weekly habit in our lives.

And, finally, will you not believe, as I believe, that the Good Spirit of God always anticipates

CATCHING MEN

our thoughtful, prayerful approach to a friend? There can be no mistake about that. So that this form of religious work becomes, relatively, the easiest which insures success. For the public revival we must await times and seasons. At most, a few weeks in the year can be allotted to that, and the strain and stress of it all are something fearful. This work for individuals opens to us any week of the year. Its agencies are slight and inexpensive, while its totals for the year may easily exceed those of the special-meeting period. My appeal, therefore, is not for the abandonment of the revival meeting, but only for another additional form of work, to be carried on continuously, with least expenditure of nerve force, yet for most of us with greatest possibility of success.

I had a friend in my own Conference a few years ago—he is dead now—to whom I owe much in the way of suggestion and enthusiasm in my ministerial life. I do not know that he ever succeeded in a revival meeting. His strength was hardly sufficient for so great a strain, but he did this other work nobly. I was visiting him one Sabbath, and in the afternoon, looking at his watch, he arose, took his hat, and saying, “I think Brown’s time has come to-day,” left the house. Two hours after, he returned and jubilantly said, “Brown’s through all right.” That night Brown joined the Church on probation. That minister

CATCHING MEN

was accustomed to "spot" a new man every week, make contact with him, and bring him to Christ. That was his minimum. If for any reason he failed any week in that, he was sore distressed, and gave himself to much prayer. But that made fifty-two men a year. That's what he fixed his heart upon. He always had some one "on the string" as he expressed it.

Brothers, I feel that we are in a very serious situation. The Church has, wisely or unwisely, publicly called for an advanced evangelism. We dare not now back down on that. Yet some of us are looking for something too distant and spectacular. The thing we want lies nearest to us in the duty of to-day and to-morrow. We can not wait the coming of the evangelist; there are not enough to go around. Nor can we wait for the favorable time, the set time in Zion. There is a simpler way. "What is that in thine hand?" It may be but your own shepherd's crook. Take that, and in the name of God go forth. *The fields are white.* The miracle wonders of redemption await you.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE OBLIGATION OF THE CHURCH TO THE LABOR- ING MAN.

BY THE REV. CHARLES
STELZLE.



REV. CHARLES STELZLE has blazed a new pathway through an ancient and long-neglected forest. Jesus of Nazareth belonged to the ranks of toil. "He was a carpenter pleasing God." The most serious question of our times is the labor question. The very future of our civilization hinges upon its solving. The labor question is not merely an economic question, it is at heart a religious question. It will not be finally settled until it is adjusted upon the basis of the Golden Rule, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Lord's Prayer. Not "My Father, bless me," but "Our Father, bless us, and help us to live together as brothers ought to live," must be the prayer of both laborers and capitalists.

Mr. Stelzle is not only a clergyman of the Presbyterian Church, but also a member of a Labor Union because of the fact that for eight years he was a machinist in the largest shop in New York City. He has the ear of organized labor for Christ and the Church through the columns of the labor press. Every week his syndicated message reaches

CATCHING MEN

millions of toilers. Among other phases of work in connection with the Presbyterian Department of Church and Labor of which he is the superintendent, he organizes and conducts great shop campaigns in our larger cities where the gospel is preached and sung to workingmen during the noon hour.

The effort to bring organized labor and organized Christianity to a better understanding is only at its beginning. Let us expect a renaissance of early Christianity when "the common people heard Him gladly."

FOR a long time we have been hearing about the alienation of the workingman from the Church. There has been good ground for this discussion. When we remember that there are about six times as many men in the Labor Unions of the country who are not touched by any of the Churches as there are men in the Presbyterian Church, you will get some idea of the importance of this problem. And yet, while that is true, I am very glad that I can bring you a word of good cheer.

A few months ago I received an invitation from the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor to come to Pittsburg to address for half an hour the four hundred delegates who represented two and one half million Trades Unionists. The Convention unanimously passed a resolution indorsing the Presbyterian Department of Church and Labor.

CATCHING MEN

At about the same time I received a telegram from the Central Labor Union of a Western city, asking me to come to that city to talk to the organized workingmen on any question of my own choosing, saying that they would pay all my traveling expenses. At the close of the address they offered me fifteen dollars for my personal use, which, of course, I declined. That is a new thing for organized labor.

It is my privilege each week to write a syndicate article for the labor press. It is printed by practically every labor press in the country, and in this way I speak, weekly, to about three million Trades Unionists and their families. I am also writing for the religious press, giving to the Church the viewpoint of the workingman. This, I consider a still greater opportunity. On the Sunday before Labor Day of last year more workingmen attended Church than on any previous Sunday in the history of the labor movement. This was due to a special appeal made by the organization which I have the honor to represent; an appeal to seven thousand Presbyterian ministers to discuss some phase of the labor question as it affects the Church. Workingmen went to their halls and marched in bodies to the churches, and I am told by many of the preachers that numbers of these workingmen are still coming to the church.

I have been suggesting a plan for an exchange

CATCHING MEN

of fraternal delegates between the Central Labor Unions and Ministers' Associations. The Ministers' Associations elect a fraternal delegate to attend the weekly meetings of the Labor Unions, and the Central Labor Unions elect a delegate to attend the meetings of the Ministers' Associations. The plan is resulting in a more cordial relationship between the Church and organized labor. Workingmen are coming to recognize the attitude of the Church towards their problems; and the ministers are coming to understand more about the problems that confront the workingman. I consider these things, and others that I might mention, most encouraging. I no longer regard the question of the workingman as a problem. I look upon it as an opportunity. The whole thing is up to the Church as it has never been before.

That does not mean that we have settled all the questions with regard to the workingman. There are new and growing problems in this connection. For three years it has been my privilege to travel through the United States, visiting practically every part of the country, studying this question from the viewpoint of the Church. As I look out upon the world of labor, it seems to me that laboring men are moving in two general directions: first, political; and second, economic. Who has not been appalled by the tremendous growth of Socialism? There are to-day about

CATCHING MEN

nine million Socialist voters throughout the world. That does not mean that there are simply nine million men who believe in Socialism, but that there are nine million men who are voting the Socialistic ticket. In our country, during the four years preceding the last Presidential election, the increase has been seven-fold; and if Socialism in our country increases in the same ratio during the next eight years, it will mean that they will elect a President of the United States. Whatever one may think of the economic value of Socialism, or the probability of its success as a political party, this fact remains: Socialism is becoming to thousands of workingmen a substitute for the Church. In the West, in some cities, they have organized preaching services; they have Socialistic Sunday-schools in which their Socialistic catechism is being taught. They have adopted the vocabulary of the Church, and they are insisting that they more nearly represent Jesus Christ than does Christianity, so called. They are trying to arouse in the heart of the workingmen what they choose to call a "class conscious" spirit, but which, as a matter of fact, soon develops into a spirit of class hatred. They are telling workingmen that there is absolutely nothing in common between them and their employer. Their literature appeals to the common man, for it is written in the language of the people. That can not always be said with

CATCHING MEN

regard to the literature sent out by the Church. The literature of the Church does not begin to compare with the literature of Socialism. Their homes and their shops are being flooded with millions of leaflets advocating Socialism. There is a single newspaper which sometimes has a circulation of nearly a million copies a week. Recently, a special edition was issued which had a circulation of over three million copies during one week. Socialists are not afraid to go out upon the streets and preach their doctrine. They are conducting more open-air meetings than all of the Protestant Churches combined.

What should be the attitude of the Church with regard to Socialism? I would say that, in the first place, we must recognize the good that there is in Socialism; and there is good in Socialism. In the second place, we must recognize the fact that a man has a perfect right to be a Socialist if he so desires. We must recognize that fact as American citizens. Furthermore, we must insist that the Church of Jesus Christ does not stand for the present social system if it is wrong; and, surely, it is far from being ideal. We stand only for so much of it as is in accordance with the principles laid down by Jesus Christ. No Christian would dare have a lower standard than that. We must insist that we are not offering them the gospel as a sop in order to make them content

CATCHING MEN

with their present condition; or that we are offering it to them because we are afraid that they will some day bring on a revolution. We must indicate to workingmen that we are preaching to them this gospel of Jesus Christ because we love them, and because Jesus Christ loved them; and that we are offering the same gospel, with all of its privileges as well as its obligations, to their employers.

Then there is that second great movement which is economic in its nature, Trades Unionism. In spite of the most strenuous opposition by Employers' Associations during the last couple of years, organized labor is stronger to-day than it ever was. With the growing strength of Employers' Associations on one side, and the increasing power of Trades Unionism on the other, we shall soon be face to face with the greatest labor war that this country has ever seen, unless some one or something intervenes. This fact might better be recognized: The Labor Union has come to stay. Of that there is absolutely no question. It is simply a matter now as to whether it is going to be a good Unionism or a bad Unionism. If the workingman is to be deprived of his right to organize, he will be driven into Socialism; and, as between a grossly materialistic Socialism and a fair, rational Unionism, give me Unionism. The ignorant foreigner, who is unacquainted with

CATCHING MEN

our American institutions, will in all probability be driven into anarchism. There are thousands of employers in our country who are being deluded by the vain hope that if they can destroy the Labor Unions they will have solved the labor question. They forget that the Labor Union is not the labor question. If you were to wipe out every Labor Union in the country to-day, you would still have the labor question to deal with, and you would have it in a more aggravated form than you have it to-day. But after everything else has been said in regard to the labor question, we come back to this proposition: The labor question is fundamentally a moral issue. History has prophesied it; intelligent labor leaders are beginning to recognize it; present reform measures indicate it. Socialism, Communism, and Anarchism are fundamentally moral questions. Waiving for a moment the practical programs advocated by these parties or systems, the following are their mottoes. There are quite a number of definitions of Socialism. There is none that would be satisfactory to all Socialists, but here is one which is satisfactory to a great many: "From every man according to his ability, to every man according to his need." That means a life of service. The Communist believes in "the surrender of one's personal interest for the good of the whole community." That implies a life of self-sacrifice. The Anarchist

CATCHING MEN

believes that men will do right without having the strong arm of the law to compel them to do right. I speak, of course, of philosophical anarchism.

You can readily understand that each of these measures presupposes a high moral character,—the elimination of selfishness and the supremacy of love. Before any one of these systems can be introduced, if ever it seems wise to introduce them, there must, first of all, be a radical change in the naturally selfish hearts of men. The development of this character is the chief business of the Church. Therefore, the Church of Jesus Christ has a most important part in the solution of the social question. In the light of this, what are the duty and obligation of the Church with regard to the workingman?

I would say, first of all, that the Church must study the problems of the workingman. Our young men at the seminaries learn about the social life of the Israelites, the Perizzites, and the Hittites, and all the other “ites;” and when they get into their pulpits to preach, they talk about the social questions that concerned these people who lived three or four thousand years ago, and we listen to them with very great interest (and it is right that we should). When our foreign missionaries return to this country to tell us about the condition of the heathen, they frequently base their strongest appeals upon the social life, the

CATCHING MEN

intellectual life, and the physical life of the heathen. But when a preacher in one of our American cities studies the social life of the people in his town, and preaches about it, some good brother will arise and calmly tell him that he might better preach the "simple" gospel. I would not have a preacher talk on labor questions as such. I have never preached a so-called labor sermon in all of my ministry; but I do say that the Church of Jesus Christ must have a clear message with regard to these questions. It must apply the great principles of Jesus Christ, the principles of righteousness, of justice, of love, and of service to these great problems. If it does not, it can not, and has no right to expect to, hold the respect of workingmen. If I felt for a moment that the Church of Christ were not interested in the abolition of child labor, the doing away of the sweatshop, and the securing of better sanitary conditions for the working people in their shops and their homes, I would cut out the Church, and I would line up with the Labor Unions, because they are making a struggle, and a brave struggle, to better these conditions. It is because I do believe that the Church is interested in these things—not so much as it should be, but increasingly so—that I am going to give what measure of strength God has given me in telling workingmen that I believe the Church is interested in them.

CATCHING MEN

I would say further, that if we are to reach workingmen, we must make the people the end of our endeavors. We sometimes forget that the Church is simply a means to an end. Most of us think that the Church is the end. We talk about building up the Church instead of building up the people. We plant our churches as a rule, not where most of the people live, and where the church is most needed, but where the church will receive the largest financial support. Within recent years, forty Protestant Churches moved out of the district below Twentieth Street in New York City, while three hundred thousand people moved in; and all that number composed of working people. On the judgment-day some Churches will be called to an account for their neglect of the great masses of the people in our large cities. I know that some people have said that that great district to which I have referred is inhabited entirely by foreigners. That is not true. I lived there too long to be fooled by that statement. But suppose it were true. I heard not so long ago of a Church that sold its property because there were so many foreigners in the neighborhood, and then they sent their money to the Board of Foreign Missions. I believe in foreign missions. I promised God a good many years ago that if He took me out of the city mission work, I would enter the foreign field. But when God in His

CATCHING MEN

providence has sent the foreigner to our very doors, He has given us a mission to evangelize him. It will be only as the Church is willing to lose her life that she will find it again among the masses of the people.

If we are to reach the masses of the people, the work must be done by the Church. Some of us have an idea that we can make a small contribution to an outside institution, and then feel that our obligation is at an end. On the other hand, when some Churches realize the needy condition of the people in a particular locality, they will organize a mission on a back street in a dingy building, put in charge of that mission a man to whom they will pay about six hundred dollars a year, and they will expect that man to solve problems that would stagger many a six-thousand-dollar man. Then they wonder why the Church is not solving the problems in our big cities. It is no wonder at all. Somebody recently said, "City mission work is the mired wheel of the American Church." The average mission as a means for reaching workingmen is a failure. The very word "mission" repels them, because it savors too much of patronage or paternalism, and there is nothing that the average workingman despises as much as these. Mr. Moody never called any of his organizations by the term mission. The building in which he conducted his first work was

CATCHING MEN

called the "tabernacle," and even when he organized a so-called rescue mission in the slums of Chicago, he insisted that it become known as "Institute Hall." What we need is not a mission but a church; a church which the workingman can feel is his own,—not an organization that is being handed out to him merely as an apology, or in order to make the people in the uptown church feel more comfortable when they think of their obligation to the city mission field.

Furthermore, if the Church is to reach workingmen, that Church must touch the workingman at as many points in his life as possible. If I but mention the word "institutional," you will understand what I mean. The Church in the workingman's district ought to be open every night in the week, and a good part of every day. It must minister to his social and intellectual as well as his physical needs. The work must be entered into, not merely to serve as a "bait" to win workingmen to the Church. Jesus Christ did not heal the sick in order to have them come to hear Him preach. He healed them because He had compassion upon them and because they needed healing. You have absolutely nothing to do with the matter as to whether the work is going to bring the workingman to your Church; that is not the question. You are to minister to that man because he needs your ministry; remembering again that

CATCHING MEN

the people should be the end of our endeavor, and not the Church. The workingman will need that ministry even when he becomes a Christian. How often during the earlier years of my ministry did a workingman's wife come to me with a story about her husband who had just become a member of the Church. He had been accustomed to going to the saloon, or to the cheap theater, or the club, or to some other place to which, he was now being told he must not go, because he had become a Christian. He had not the resources within himself that some other people have. He was not accustomed to reading. He hardly knew how to use his mind. He had barely gotten into that atmosphere which would restrain him, and help him, and build him up, and he was having the struggle of his life. Some of you may say that if a man is a Christian he will not be tempted that way. I do not know what kind of stuff you are made of, but I know that I have need of all the grace that God gives me to keep me from doing the things that I ought not to do, and to do the things that He wants me to do. What can we say for the workingman who has not had some of the advantages that you and I have enjoyed?

There is just one thing else I want to say. If the Church is to win workingmen for Jesus Christ, it must preach the gospel of Jesus Christ aggressively and with tremendous enthusiasm. The

CATCHING MEN

day has gone by, if ever there was such a day, when you can hang a sign outside of your church door, that reads, "Seats free, everybody welcome," and then expect the workingman to come in. He will not come. Furthermore, there is not a single command found in the Scriptures for the unconverted man to go to church. He is invited to come to Jesus Christ, and to accept the gift of eternal life which Jesus Christ has to offer, and after he becomes a Christian he is told not to forget "The Assembly of the Saints," etc. These passages that come to your mind with regard to church attendance refer to the Christian man, and not to the unconverted man. Of course, in the meantime, he is not exempt from the penalty of rejecting Jesus Christ, and he can not be made comfortable by my statement, and after he becomes a Christian the same obligation rests upon him; but until he does become a Christian there is no specific command for that man to go to church. On the other hand, I find command after command for the Christian, the Church member, to go out upon the highways and hedges, and compel them to come into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Do you not see what this means? It means that the whole responsibility with regard to this matter rests upon you and upon me, and if some man outside of the Church does not hear about Jesus Christ, it is because you or I or some

CATCHING MEN

other Christians are failing to do our duty. Sometimes it is said that it is the fault of the workingman that he does not go to church. Suppose that it is. Was not the Church of Jesus Christ established for faulty people? It seems to me that the hospital might say, with as much reason, to its inmates, "We can do nothing for you because you are sick," as for the Church to say to the masses of the people, "We can do nothing for you because you are at fault."

The greater their fault, the greater becomes your responsibility and mine in the matter of reaching workingmen with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We have absolutely no excuse in this matter. The whole thing is up to the Church. It is not up to the workingman. It is not so much a question as to whether the workingman goes to the Church, as it is whether the Church goes to the workingman. Either we must admit that the Church of Jesus Christ is equal to this problem, or else we must confess that the Church of Jesus Christ is a failure. If the workingman does not go to Church, we must take the Church to him,—in the shop at the noon hour, under the tent during the summer season, out upon the streets where people gather. "But," you may say, "that kind of work is so undignified. Imagine my pastor preaching upon the street." Solomon said that

CATCHING MEN

"Folly is set in great dignity." Perhaps you have heard this story. A woman went to a certain church and took a seat in the gallery. During the sermon she suddenly cried out "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" One of the ushers touched her on the shoulder and said to her: "What do you mean, madam, by making so much noise?" "O!" she replied: "Praise the Lord, I've got religion." "Why," he said, "this is no place to get religion; this is a church." I pity the Church that has gotten so far away from the spirit of evangelism, so far away from the spirit of Jesus Christ, as to become shocked at a sinner who desires to forsake his sin, even though he gives public expression to that desire. And yet I have the largest sympathy for any one who does not like to do the unusual thing in Christian work. I was brought up in a most conservative Presbyterian Church in New York City. I had always imagined that open-air work was done principally by long-haired men and short-haired women. I had very little use for an open-air preacher. I imagined that he was a crank; but I am thankful that there came an experience in my life which completely changed my mind with regard to this method of work. I think also that Presbyterians have come to learn that a false conservatism is not an essential part of Presby-

CATCHING MEN

terianism any more than it is a part of Methodism. I sometimes think that our good Methodist friends are forgetting that, and I frankly believe that in some cities of our country the Presbyterian Church has gotten the old spirit of Methodism, the spirit of aggressive evangelism, which is the only thing that ever called your Church into existence,—the answer to the cry for the gospel from the common people. And it is because of this that in so many places God has signally blessed the Presbyterian Church in its work of preaching to the masses of the people.

Some time ago I was talking to a preacher in a Western city, whose church borders a beautiful park. On every summer night about ten thousand people thronged that park, while inside of his church, which seated about fifteen hundred people, there were only fifty people present. I said to this minister: "Doctor, why don't you get out on your front steps and have an open-air meeting? Organize your young people into a choir, or hire a cornetist. You have a voice big enough to be heard two blocks away. The people will come to your side of the park, and you can preach to them, and they will go into your church for an after-meeting." He replied, "I think that I will do it, but I must see my session first." Somebody said to me a little while ago that the word,

CATCHING MEN

“session,” means, to “sit on things.” That is just what they did. After they had discussed the matter for a little while, one of the members of the session said, “We believe that your plan would be a most excellent one, but you know we have a grass plot in front of our church, and some of the people might come out of the park and step on the grass.” That makes some of you smile, and I do not wonder at it. But let me ask you, What is your “grass plot?” What stands between you and the great masses of the people? Is it your pride? Is it your dignity? Is it your selfishness? O that we might ask God to put His finger on the thing in your life and mine that keeps us from doing the things that He wants us to do; and then let us ask Him to take it out, and He will do it. Then let us go and do His work. It may not be to preach upon the streets, and yet it may be. It may be that God wants you to speak to that man who comes to your door every day of his life,—the butcher, the baker, the milkman. He knows that you belong to the Church, and he wonders why you never ask him to come. He wonders why you never seem at all concerned as to whether or not he is a Christian; and he is beginning to wonder, perhaps, if you have got the real thing, or whether or not the whole business is not a sham. Perhaps it is that

CATCHING MEN

man at work near to you at the desk, or at the bench, or in the store, to whom you are to speak; not making a bore of yourself—that is not at all necessary—but in a bright, healthy, manly way, living the Christian life and showing him that you are interested in him. When you and I do that, the labor question will be nearer a solution, and the kingdom of God will be closer at hand.

CHAPTER XIV.
THEORY AND PRACTICE IN SOUL-
WINNING.

BY JOHNSTON MYERS, D. D.



PASTOR JOHNSTON MYERS represents a definite type of city mission work. Immanuel Baptist Church, Chicago, of which he is pastor, treats its six or seven missions as branches of that Church. Its pastor is their pastor; their missionaries are assistant pastors of the great Church. The converts become members, not of the missions, but of the Church, of which the missions are a vital part. The missions are not left to the control of inexperienced or untrained workers, and the workers are not left to seek a precarious support, but are supported by the Church. Dr. Myers urges every Church in the city and suburbs, that is at all able, to sustain as many Church missions as it can among those who need them most.

WE learn to do a thing by doing it. There has been a large amount of discussion and a small amount of doing in the evangelistic field. It is easier to talk than to do. There is a wide difference between theory and practice. Many a

CATCHING MEN

preacher and leader has exploited his plans beforehand and received applause for what he intended to do, but it all ended with the advertising. When he came to convince men, to raise money, definitely to bring about results, he was an utter failure. The splendid schemes never became realities. Many of our evangelistic leaders know just how souls may be won for Christ. They make a profound impression when speaking about consecration, the Holy Spirit, personal work, and similar subjects. They themselves frequently have no power to do the thing which they have so eloquently discussed. President Roosevelt has recently given a profound thought in this terse sentence, "It is the shot that hits which counts." Not the theories about naval warfare are most valuable in the hour of actual battle, but the shot which goes straight to the very heart of the enemy's ship and sends her to the bottom.

The Church needs most of all to-day the men who can do things rather than the men who can talk about doing them. There are certain conditions which may be briefly outlined as essential to the man who is going to his fellow-men with the purpose of bringing them directly and definitely into the kingdom of Christ and into the membership of a Church.

The difficult character of the task must be considered. God is with him, but all other forces

CATCHING MEN

are against him. Sin, prejudice, indifference, the cares of life, all conspire to hinder his leading the object of his thought and prayer to Christ. Heroic work, however, brings out heroes and heroines. The very hindrance fascinates the true soldier of Jesus Christ. Others may do the easier tasks of speaking, writing, and comforting the saints. He is fitted to plunge into the thick of the fight, and, driving back the hosts of evil, add one more to the army of Jesus Christ. Soul-winning requires a courage and tact which no other form of Christianity demands. The man or woman who engages constantly and successfully in this work presents to the Head of the Church the most valuable and honorable service. To speak to some saint or to a gathering of saints about some subjects with which they are already in sympathy is usually a delight. To present Christ to a man who is hostile, or at least indifferent to His gospel, requires an order of ability which is not common among Christians.

The people who enter this field of service must possess certain natural gifts. Not all are evangelists. Not all are teachers. Not all are preachers. The man who instructs Christians how to win souls to Christ is not necessarily an evangelist. The man or the woman who actually wins them for Christ is the evangelist. They must possess the gifts of tact, perseverance, and an unselfish love

CATCHING MEN

for Christ and for people. Theirs must be popular gifts which at once win confidence and affection. Where such persons are found, either in the pulpit or the pew, they should be encouraged in every possible way to devote themselves to the direct work of bringing others to the Savior. The great business house has its book-keepers, its porters, its superintendent, and its salesmen. The wise head of the firm watches carefully to see that the salesman does not get into the book-keeper's place. He does not encourage the porter to try to sell goods. The soul-winner is the man who sells the goods, the man who binds the bargain, the man upon whom the very life of the firm depends. The Church of Christ to-day is not in great need of better theories or more instructions in the theories of saving souls. Those who actually bring things to pass in the redemption of the world should be discovered and brought to the front immediately. Select the salesmen of the kingdom from our Churches, and let them go out and compel, by their love, their personality, their peculiar gifts, the lost to come in.

For this class of workers and this kind of work there should be no lack of money. We have given, as Churches, hundreds of millions for education. We have created great armies of young people for the culture and development of those who have been saved. In the meantime, disheartening re-

CATCHING MEN

ports have come from many denominational gatherings. They tell us that the world is drifting away from the Church. One Christian body, with magnificent preachers and schools, with more than their share of philanthropists and distinguished social leaders, reported at a recent gathering that, at the present rate of progress, within twenty-five years that Christian body would go out of existence. Their weakness has been the weakness of every Church of Christ. We have given our money for food, books, and buildings, when the largest sum should have been given to the work of rescuing the lost; and back of the evangelist and around him should have been the richest and best resources of the Churches. This man with gifts has had, in many instances, a feeble financial and moral support. Let the Churches lay their hands upon the evangelists and say to them, "Your energies and abilities must be given to the one difficult task of bringing a lost, rebellious world into the kingdom of Jesus Christ." It is easier to get money for buildings. The world looks upon the massive structures which bear the names of the donors, and there is something tangible as a reminder of the giver and his gift. The feeding and clothing of men brings the approval and the applause of the public in general. It is only consecrated Christian money which will ever go to the work of salvation. This is the highest and most needed form of giv-

CATCHING MEN

ing to-day. In this hour of sin and suffering in the world, he who gives to evangelize the world will have the approval of its Divine Savior and the eternal reward.

To save men we must go where they are most numerous. It is the misfortune of the Church that so many of our ablest men are located in the suburban Churches. The salary is smaller, the position less attractive, the honors less abundant in the down-town field, and so we place there the members and the ministry who have had fewer advantages and possess less resources of brains and money. In other words, at the very "bloody angle" of the fight we locate the inferior general and the troops which have been most poorly prepared for the battle. As a result, every denomination in every great city in the land has been practically driven from the field, and has retired behind the breastworks of the more comfortable residence districts. Poverty, crime, and open defiance of God and His laws revel in the thickly populated parts of the city, while hundreds of our big brainy men are attending social functions and resting in beautiful homes where the people whom they serve live. The mission worker, a man usually of inferior ability and with an uncertain support, is ridiculed by the overwhelming throngs who surge by and around his poorly equipped building. Let us place the evangelist and the evangelistic men and women

CATCHING MEN

right where the multitudes gather. Let these loving, attractive, skillful people win by personal contact. Let the place where they meet and to which they invite the people surpass in beauty, if possible, the theater and saloon. It is no wonder that lost, unbelieving souls turn to what the world offers. The halls of amusement and the places of debauchery are so bright and pretty and attractive that it would be a strange choice for any unprejudiced mind to make if he were to go to the mission or the down-town Church, where there is only an attempt at respectability and decency. There is no money to provide artistic groupings of lights, fountains, sweetest music, and a variety of comforts. Who will rise and show that Jesus Christ came first of all, not to educate the world, but to save the world, and the best we have and the most we have should be given for the direct work of convincing men of sin and leading them into lives of purity and joy through Him?

Toward the salvation of the world every philanthropy and benevolence of the Church should tend. All the lines of activity, when we please Christ, will converge toward the winning of souls for Him. We have given, as Churches, too much money to charitable institutions and organizations which have no religious aim or object. Every Christian who partakes of the Spirit of Christ must believe in feeding, clothing, and caring for

CATCHING MEN

the material side of life; but that bread must be given which will lead the one receiving it to partake of the Bread of Life. Our charity must speak of Christ to those who receive it. This was the method of our Lord. He certainly fed the multitude, but this was only a part of the plan which He had in mind. Ultimately they were to be led into salvation. Charity without Christ is a practical failure. Let the hospital, the orphanage, and the food be used to win souls, to make the Church more powerful and influential in the community. We must have the confidence and love of the people if we are to have them listen to our message. That Church which gives little material aid will have little spiritual power. However, even the "cup of cold water" should be given "in the name of a disciple."

This is to be the glory of the Church in general and of the individual Church. Our value is to be estimated by the souls which are saved through our Church or our own lives. This may not be in the number saved, for sometimes from the salvation of a few in after years larger multitudes will be reached. Our cause of joy and rejoicing must, however, be in this for which Christ died—"to seek and to save that which was lost." It would not be an unwise standard of measurements for the men of our ministry to make it the number of people brought to Christ and saved

CATCHING MEN

through that ministry. Not the churches he has built or the moral or educational influence he has exerted, but the number of men and women who, through him and his Church, have repented of their sins, confessed their faith in Christ, and united with the people of God. In that eternal world where just estimates of value will be placed, the highest honors must be given to the soul-winners. "They shall shine as the stars for ever and ever." The need of the hour is not for more books or discussion, but for men and women who will do the business of winning souls.



CHAPTER XV.

THOROUGHGOING EVANGELISM.

EVANGELIST WILLIAM A.
SUNDAY.

ONE of the most serious defects in much of our modern evangelism is the failure to produce profound conviction for sin. A superficial revivalism brings no abiding results to the Church.

There is one word which characterizes the work of Evangelist William A. Sunday, and that is *thoroughness, thoroughness, thoroughness*. He remains in a community four or five weeks. He pours forth the truth during about half the time, for the purpose of arousing the Church itself. When the invitation is finally given to the unsaved, they come in scores and hundreds, weeping their way to Calvary. They deliberately march up the aisle, take the evangelist by the hand, and publicly pledge themselves to their Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. Whole counties are stirred by meetings held in one town. The gospel becomes in his hands an anti-saloon league, a force in civic as well as in personal regeneration.

Many of the converts are occupying prominent official positions in Churches where the Mighty Evangel has been proclaimed. Rev.

CATCHING MEN

Dr. George I. La Rash does not speak too strongly after having listened faithfully to the man, and his message. "Look at him as he tears off the mask of hypocrisy among Church members. See him expose those who have the form but deny the power of Godliness. Hear him denounce the do-nothings in the Church. 'Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things I say unto you?' Then he boldly attacks the votaries of society; holds up to the light their vapid pleasures, their aimless and selfish lives. Corrupt politics comes in for its share of scathing rebuke; and so, beginning with the individual, he passes to the home, and into society, politics, and business, until he has run the gamut of all classes and conditions of men and women, striking here and there at every form of evil, without fear or favor, if by any means he may bring all from sin to life in Jesus Christ."

We can do no better than to reproduce one of his heart-searching sermons, addressed specially to the Church. The discourse was delivered during the great revival of 1906 at Princeton, Illinois. The subject was, "The four groups in the Garden of Gethsemane, with the largest group the farthest from Christ." Text, part of Matthew xxvi, 12: "Lord, is it I?" After a powerful introduction upon the fall of man, and the plan of redemption in Jesus Christ, he came to the events of the Last Supper.

Peter perhaps noticed that the Master looked sad, and told John, the beloved disciple, to ask Him why. Then Jesus said, "One of you shall betray Me." The disciples are amazed, incredulous. John asks, "Lord,

CATCHING MEN

is it I?" and the others also ask the same question, even Judas, the betrayer. When Jesus told Judas to do quickly what he was to do, the others, knowing him to be the treasurer, thought He referred to some commodity to be used in the feast the coming day, and did not understand His real meaning. Then, after the supper was over, He leads them out over the little brook Kedron to the Garden of Gethsemane. "And that," said Rev. Sunday, "brings me to my subject."

THE GROUPS.

"THERE were four groups of people here—three in the garden, and Judas in a group all by himself outside. We have no record that any of these men wished to change their condition. Notice the *arrangement* of these groups. One consisted of eight people and was near the line—only a few steps and they would be outside with Judas. The group is like a large percentage of the people in the Church to-day—just as near the line of the world as they can get—only a few steps away. They mingle with the world, keep up their old habits—near the edge. The truth is not pleasant to hear, but it is the truth. Ask any pastor in Princeton and he must acknowledge that many of those whose names are on the Church record lead such a good Lord, good devil, cider, chalk, milk, and vinegar life, that it is hard to tell whether they are in the Church or not. They

CATCHING MEN

have no aspirations for firm grip on God—no grip on Jesus Christ; they never practice cheerful self-denial, have no power in prevailing prayer, they never strike a firm blow for God and home and native land. They nullify the efforts and stultify the powers of those who are trying to do anything and are themselves flat failures. They become barnacles on the ship of Zion and parasites on the tree of life.

OBLIGATIONS.

“You owe it to Jesus Christ to live for Him. You owe it to the world to testify against its sin and wickedness. I don’t care a turn of the hand whether the world hisses or approves what I say or do, if it is pleasing to God. We can not expect the world to approve when we do what is right, and you are a flat failure if you do not stir up the devil—if none speak a word against you.

“The nearer the relationship between parties, the greater the ties of obligation. I owe to Mrs. Sunday and our three children what I don’t owe to any other woman and children on God’s dirt. You owe to your wife and children what you owe to no others on earth. By faith in Jesus Christ we become the children of God and we owe to Him the love and allegiance of children. The devil and I are bitter enemies. I’ll give no quarter

CATCHING MEN

and ask none from him. I served him faithfully for twenty-two years and it gave him the stomach-ache to lose me; and I have given it to him many a time since." Then, leaning over the desk, the speaker asked in his most entreating tones, "Do n't you hate the devil?"

"The nearer the relationship the greater the obligation, and also the greater the provocation. One dishonest act of mine would break my wife's heart; but you people here do n't care anything about me—you never saw me before and probably never will see me again. But the acts of those who are near and dear to us count. I think the acts of some of those who profess to be redeemed would put tears into the eyes of Jesus Christ Himself if that were possible."

Then he told the story of a woman who asked of her pastor why she was unsuccessful in winning her husband to God. He told her because her own life was not consistent with her profession, and, being a sensible woman, she thanked him for his plain speaking and reformed. Her husband became converted, and, in answer to her questions as to the cause of her previous failures, said: "I used to ask you to go to the theater, and you went; you asked me to go to church, and I went. I asked you to go to a card party, and you went; you asked me to go to prayer-meeting, and I went. You went to the same

CATCHING MEN

places and did the same things as I; what was the difference in our lives?" "That is the trouble with too many Church members—they are down on a level with the world, and the world has no respect for your religion if you don't live up to it. I like to see men and women as loyal to Jesus Christ as was the Prince of Orange to the Netherlands when he said that 'not for life, wife, lands, or children' would he be disloyal to his country. If men and women would be as true as that to their God, would do the things God directs, and not do the things He tells them not to do, they could soon win the world for Christ.

DIFFERENCE IN NUMBERS.

"We have noticed the difference in the *positions* of these groups, now note the difference in *size*. The traitor Judas gone, there are only eleven disciples left, and of them, eight here near the edge of the garden, near the world, and the three farther on. That is true every time—the larger number near the outside. How many of the members of any Church attend the prayer-meeting, work in the revival, do personal work for the Lord? How many can you depend on three hundred and sixty-five days in the year? As Webster said, 'There is always room at the top,' and that is just as true in religion as worldly position. The nearer we get to Jesus Christ, the

CATCHING MEN

more elbow room we have; the farther away from Him we are, the bigger the mob. Your position on the spiritual ladder is easily told. A word, an act, a gesture, your absence or presence, will give a clear insight into your character. Then still farther on was Jesus, who prayed alone. So they were grouped when Judas came with the officers and those to whom he had sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver—\$15. He passes the first group, and they call to him, 'Where are you going, Judas?' 'I am looking for Jesus.' 'Why?' 'To betray Him.' Did they try to stop him. No. Sure? No, they did n't try to stop him. Judas was not looking for Christ with them; he knew the Master was not there. They had shown him their lack of faith in Christ once before, when Jesus had taken Peter and James and John with Him onto the Mount of Transfiguration, and the man whose son was possessed of a devil, as are many young bucks of Princeton, no doubt, had come to the other disciples with him and they had been unable to cast out the devil because of their lack of faith. This led the father to doubt the power of Christ, just as the lack of faith on the part of His followers to-day leads to doubt of Jesus. Failures on your part to live up to your profession makes skeptics. Why, the whole worldly crowd in the Church to-day could not cast out a devil as big as a peanut.

CATCHING MEN

“As a principle increases in its meaning, it decreases in the number of its adherents. Suppose by education I mean merely the ability to read and write—then a large per cent of our people are educated. If I mean that to be educated one must be a graduate of our public schools, the per cent of educated ones becomes smaller; if I mean graduates of academies and seminaries, then perhaps five per cent; while if I mean college and university graduates, only about one-fifth of one per cent are educated. If by the word friend you mean every one with whom you pass the greetings of the day when you pass on the street, then you have scads of 'em; but if you mean those who will defend your character when it is attacked by some old gossiping carrion-vender, scandal-monger, whose tongue wags and peddles out lies that are derogatory to your character, then they are mighty few. If by Christians we mean all the men and women whose names are on the Church records, there are twenty-six millions of them; but if we mean those who are really willing to do God's will, if we really are willing, if we did the things God wants us to do, why have we not captured the world for Christ? We are doing a little better the last year or two, but still by the way some people live you would think they had a through ticket straight to heaven, and have made arrangements with the porter to call them when

CATCHING MEN

they arrive at the gates of the New Jerusalem,
leaving them nothing to do but lie in their berths
and sleep. The first thing they know they will be
sidetracked with a hot-box!

"I once asked a friend of mine, pastor of a Church of over eight hundred members in a town where I was holding a meeting, how many of his members were working for the success of the revival; and with tears and sobs he told me that the largest number he had been able to get to attend any night had been twenty-eight, and that if his life depended on getting fifty of them to take hold and work, he would lose his life.

"The trouble with the Church is that it has n't
smelt gunpowder for fifty years. A century ago
the progress of the Church was hindered by opposition; now its worst hindrance is the apathy and indifference of its members. We are on the defensive rather than the aggressive, and our prosperity has made us indifferent to God. We are not doing as we ought, and that is the reason we are not winning the world to Christ. If I had a hundred tongues, and every tongue speaking a different language in a different key at the same time, I could not do justice to the splendid chaos that the card-playing, dancing, Sabbath-dedicating, beer-guzzling, gin-fizzling, wine-sizzling, whisky-fuzzling crowd in the Church brings to the Church of Jesus Christ. There is but one voice

CATCHING MEN

from the faithful preacher, evangelist, or Church member to-day about the Church of God—she is sick. And the Church rather enjoys her invalidism and the soft massage treatment she receives at the hands of some. But that is not my way; I drive my scalpel up to the hilt into the putrifying mass that is boring its way into the very vitals of the Church. Then some salaried quack says I have stabbed the Church. He is a liar. I am only plunging the dagger of the gospel up to the hilt into the putrifying abscess at her vitals.

“Four out of five of those whose names appear on the Church records are doing absolutely nothing to bring the world to Christ. The world is no better for their having lived in it.

DIFFERENCE IN REVELATION.

“We have noticed the different positions of these three groups in the garden, and their different sizes. Now let us note the *progressive stages of revelation*. To the first Jesus said, ‘Sit ye here.’ That was all. To the next He said, ‘My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death.’ A little fuller revelation. He told the three what He never breathed to the eight. Then, when He was alone, He said, ‘My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.’ No hint of the cup had been given to those fellows back there near the gate, and but little more to the other three. Do

CATCHING MEN

you want God to reveal Himself to you? Then get down on your knees and confess your sins, and God will make His revelations to you. Get close to Him if you would know Him. I like to be charitable and think that the disciples did not know any better, that they did not realize what was happening in the life of their Master."

Here the speaker gave a most vivid illustration from his own life, telling of the bitter struggle his mother had to keep the wolf from the door and of her efforts for her two little fatherless sons; but the wolf triumphed in the battle and at last she decided to send the boys to the Soldiers' Orphans' Home. The night before the separation they slept the innocent sleep of childhood, but when she called them in the morning her disheveled hair, red eyes, and sunken cheeks betrayed that she had spent the night in watchfulness and prayer. "Why?" asked the speaker, "Because she realized that this separation might be for all time, that she might never see her boys again. Mother prayed, we slept. Jesus prayed, the disciples slept. And to-day the Church of God is asleep. You don't realize your condition, or you would not do as you do. Wake up! and live for God. You tell me how much you read your Bible, how much you pray, and how much you give to help the cause of Christianity, and I will tell you where the figures point for you on God's thermometer.

CATCHING MEN

DIFFERENCE IN DUTY.

"Now let us notice the *difference in duty*. To the first group Jesus said only, 'Sit ye here.' That was all He told them. To the next ones He said, 'Watch and pray.' He did n't ask those first fellows to pray; they would n't have done it if He had. Just as some of you ministers here never ask certain of your members to pray, because you do n't want to humiliate them and yourselves and you know they would n't do it. If you would ask yourself the question, 'How much would be accomplished if every Church member lived as I live, did as I do, gave as I give to the work of the Church?' you would realize and appreciate how much or how little some do.

"But Jesus asked Peter and James and John to pray. He thought He could bank on them. They had been with Him on the mount of transfiguration, they had gone with Him to the home of Jairus when his daughter was restored to life, they had been with Him at the tomb of Lazarus—everywhere they had been His inseparable companions. Then Jesus went a stone's cast and prayed. An hour later He came back to the three to see how they were getting along, and found them all asleep. Instead of doing their duty, doing what was commanded them, they had followed their own wishes and inclinations and

CATCHING MEN

had gone to sleep. We do what we want to instead of what God tells us. Yet these were the best Jesus had, and they had proved unfaithful. Think of the disappointment it must have been to Him! Of all the agonies of this life, that which crushes the heart and seems to annihilate reason and crucify hope, is to be disappointed in those that we thought we could bank on! The Church has lost its high moral and spiritual influence because of the unfaithfulness of its members. The test of what a man is, is *what he does*.

THE TEST.

“How many of us are willing to follow Jesus to the last ditch? The disciples proved that they were not. Only a few hours before Peter had been protesting his loyalty, yet before daybreak he had thrice denied his Lord. We say, ‘Not my will, but—’ and there we hang up the receiver. ‘Not my will, but—’ we ring off. ‘Not my will, but—’ there we puncture a tire. ‘Not my will, but—’ there we jump the trolley. ‘Not my will, but—’ there we turn out the light. ‘Not my will, but—’ it might hurt my business. ‘Not my will, but—’ I might lose a vote. ‘Not my will, but—’ I might not be invited to that card party. ‘Not my will, but—’ I could not go to the theater. ‘Not my will, but—’ I couldn’t drink beer. ‘Not my will, but—’ I couldn’t skin that fellow in a

CATCHING MEN

trade. 'Not my will, but—' I could n't cuss if my wife did n't have supper ready when I got home. 'Not my will, but—' here's where you cash in. It is a difference in duty. Jesus had to bear the cross, and die for you, and for the world. He was ready to do His duty—are you ready to do yours in this meeting? I am ready to do mine. The Lord managed to get along with this old world before I was born and He can get along when I am gone, but I'll do all I can for Him while I live. Just now your paramount duty and mine is to help in these meetings."

Here the speaker grew eloquent, and with his expressive countenance and intense earnestness, put a depth of feeling into a recital of the closing of the scene in the garden which mere type can not give. "Imagine we had been there and viewed the scene. The black-hearted wretch, Judas, comes and betrays his Master with a kiss! Jesus is seized and hurried away to Annas, then to Pilate, then to Herod and back to Pilate again, who found no fault in Him, but yielded to the demands of the rabble. They scourged Him, and spat upon Him, and taunted Him. Then it was that the gang, the three and the eight who had been with Him in the garden, forsook Him. See Him as the cross is placed upon His back and He staggers along the road—falls, is jerked to His feet, then falls again, till finally the cross

CATCHING MEN

is laid upon the shoulders of a colored man. The colored race has borne many a cross in the plan of civilization, but never one grander than this! Then they come to the place where they crucify Him. Hear the thud, thud of the hammers as the nails are driven into His hands! Hear the chug of the cross as it drops into the hole prepared for it! Hear the words of agony that break from the lips of the Son of God! Had we eyes we could see the air filled with angels and hear the music of the heavenly choir. We could see and hear the archangel as he leans over the battlements of heaven and calls, 'Lord, if you want me to come and sweep the bloodthirsty gang from the face of the earth, I'll come—just wave your right hand! But the hand was still, the bowed head only drooped lower, till at last the spirit took its flight to the realms above with the joyful tidings that peace had been made through the death on the cross!

"Where are you? To which group do you belong? Are you on the outside with Judas selling your Lord for the pleasure of the world? Or are you here? or here?

THE SEQUEL.

"Now what about the after history of these disciples? Nothing more is known of Judas. Good-bye, old suicide! And, with the possible

CATCHING MEN

exception of Matthew, nothing more is known of the eight. How about the three? Peter was the one who preached that wonderful sermon on the day of Pentecost when 3,000 souls were born into the kingdom, and he wrote the Epistles which bear his name. John was more of a writer than a talker, and he wrote the fourth Gospel, the three Epistles, and the wonderful Revelation. James became the head of the Church at Jerusalem, and was the first to give his life for the cause of the Master. It was the men who were nearest to Jesus whose lives will last.

“What about Jesus? As long as the world stands, as long as men shall stand on the platform and preach to a sin-cursed world, the story of the cross shall be told.” Here he told a story of a child caught by an alligator and devoured before the very eyes of its helpless father, and added, “That story made an impression on me when I heard it which I could not shake off for days; but terrible as such a fate would be, I would rather see my children meet death in the jaws of an alligator than to see them live to defy God and trample the principles of Christianity beneath their feet!

“Infinitely more destructive than the monsters of the stream are the monsters of intemperance, and unbelief and avarice and greed and lust in the world to-day! The world is calling to the

CATCHING MEN

Church to hurry to the rescue, but the Church—Great God! the Church is drunk with pleasure and heeds not the call. Get down on your knees and confess your sins, then get out and do something for the salvation of the world!”

In concluding he asked every Christian in the house who was willing to help in the work of the Lord, who was ready to do His will and follow His commands, to stand while he led in an earnest prayer for the blessing of God on the meeting, that it might be a success and the instrument of good to many.

V
790
75
Brushingham, John Patrick.
Catching men; studies in vital e
J.P. Brushingham ... Introduction
Luther B. Wilson, foreword by Evar
and contributions by other eminent
evangelistic work. Cincinnati, Je
Graham; New York, Eaton & Mains (c
222p. front., illus. (ports.,

1. Evangelistic work. I. Title.

